

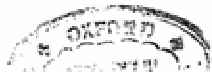
# NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS
# IN
# HINDU PHILOSOPHY.

BY

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To

SIR SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN.

# PREFACE

The present work was written in 1938 for the Ph.D. degree of the University of London. While sending it to the press in 1943, much as I wished to improve it in various ways, I soon discovered that any attempt at improvement today would only mean re-writing it altogether. I have, therefore, left it untouched. Though my main predilections and conclusions remain the same, I am quite sure that, were I to write it today, I should write differently and in a much altered form. Still, it is now being published as it was originally written in 1938.

Hardly anything need be said in justification of the publication which, I believe, is always the same—a natural desire for publication mixed with a perhaps not entirely unjustifiable hope that the book may be read with profit by a few interested students of the subject concerned.

Of the persons connected with the writing of the work, mention should first be made of Dr. B. Heimann, Ph.D., of the School of Oriental Studies, London, the memory of whose kind help and guidance throughout my association with her in London is indeed a rare pleasure. With the passing of time, this memory is becoming more and more of a precious possession to me.

Of Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, Spalding Professor of Eastern Religion and Ethics at the University of Oxford, it is rather difficult to speak. The present work, as well as the author, had the honour of being examined by him at London. This acquaintance with him has subsequently developed, on my part, into increasing reverence and personal

attachment. Naturally, therefore, any formal acknowledgement of the feelings that the author has towards him is embarrassing.

My obligations to my friend Dr. B. R. Misra, Ph.D. (London), Head of the Department of Economics and Commerce, Hindu University, Benares should, also, be publicy acknowledged. To him alone is the publication of the book due. It is through his untiring efforts and persistent enthusiasm that the book is being published at all. Left to myself it would perhaps never have been published.

This work was to have been published by Messrs. Allen & Unwin, London. But the war intervened. My thanks are also due to Messrs. Nand Kishore & Brothers, the enterprising publishers of Benares, who undertook to publish the book in spite of the war difficulties.

I am fully conscious of the numerous mistakes and imperfections which any critical reader is bound to find in the book. Now I can only wish that they had not been there and trust, that taking into consideration a number of handicaps which attended its printing and publication during a time of distress, the readers will kindly overlook them.

HINDU COLLEGE,
DELHI,
27. 12. 43.

S. K. SAKSENA.

# CONTENTS.

## PART I THE PRE-SYSTEMATIC SPECULATIONS.



## PART II THE SYSTEMATIC SPECULATIONS.

# INTRODUCTORY

## *Man's Place in the Cosmos*

From the moment man began to reflect on his own being, the fact of his consciousness or the cognitive relation in which he stood to the world, has drawn his persistent attention. He realised that he had in him more than others around him. He differed in an unmistakable way from the stone, the plants and the animals, no matter how similar to these he looked in other respects. He alone, in the cosmos, had the privilege of full cognition and could wonder and stare at the mystery of the cosmos, himself included. The fact of his being conscious was a distinction. It at once put him far above his universe—that entire and gigantic process of dimensionless creation, of which he himself was but a product. Though in it, he could, by means of his thought, stand aloof for a moment and try to know what the creation itself was about. The unconscious cosmos could not do it. Nor could it know that during the course of its long history, it had chanced to evolve the strange phenomenon of thought and consciousness in man. In a sense, it had evolved its 'other', its rival, who could turn back, reflect, and be critical of its own maker. Man, in this respect, was greater than the cosmos. But this is only one side of the picture, for consciousness is a double-edged weapon. Man had to pay a big price for the prerogative of his consciousness. In the process of acquiring intellect he also lost something. By virtue of his being endowed with thought, he had hoped to succeed in unravelling the mystery and the meaning of life and universe. But very soon he began to doubt if after all his intellect was not given only to mock him. Awareness of a situation and the capacity to reflect, only raise questions where none previously existed, and often the spirit

of enquiry interrogates, only to listen to the echoes of its own questions. Nature does not always answer '*here*' to man's cry of '*where*', and questions regarding the how and where of things fade away into the dim distance of an all-enveloping silence. In the earlist Hindu literature, we read that the face of Truth is hidden '*satyasyāpihitam-mukham*', and that is why man has prayed to this all-embracing darkness under various names suggestive of the thick and the massive covering designated now as Varuṇa, now as Aditi, now as just Māyā, and now as Darkness or Death. Ability to be inquisitive is not always a blessing, and man has realised this painful truth. This is sufficiently evinced by the cycles of deadlocks in the history of human enquiry. Any one acquainted with the history of eternal questionings of the human mind could easily testify to the lack of satisfaction and the small measure of success achieved so far in the venture.

Apart from the consideration of the relatively futile uses of his gifts of consciousness, man has also lost in the comparative peace and blissfulness of an uncognitive existence. He has often envied the life and happiness of his lower fellow beings. The spontaneity and richness of the growth of the vegetable kingdom and the perfect adjustment of the instinctive animal life, which are devoid of any questionings regarding the origin and development of the universe, have led man to question the very importance and utility of his weapon of thought. Be that as it may, cognition remains as inescapable fact of life. Whether for good or for evil, we cannot get away from it, and it is worthwhile, therefore, to enquire into its nature and try to know as much about it as possible.

*The Meaning of Consciousness*

Consciousness is here used tentatively in the sense opposite to that of unconsciousness, as implying the awareness of a situation characterised by the relationship of subject and object in an act of cognition.

It also implies the consciousness of selfhood, an '*Ahampratyaya*', for no one is ever empirically conscious without being implicitly conscious also of one's own self. A reflective self-feeling sharply divides the world of consciousness from the world of unconsciousness. The 'I' as the distinguishing feature of the realm of consciousness is absent from the realm of the unconscious.* A flower in a bed of flowers or a pebble in a group of pebbles is not aware of another flower or a pebble by its side, and does not appear in any cognitive relation with its neighbour. But if we imagine that one knows the other, then it is at once raised to the status of a subject with reference to the one which is for the moment the object of its awareness. And then, if the other also is in its turn a subject, the unconscious group of flowers becomes a society of subjects with inter-subjective relations. There is no such thing as an unconscious inter-objective existence, which, if it exists, does so only in the mind of a conscious subject. Consciousness or '*Samvit*' is, therefore, a capacity to be a subject, and implies the presence of a cognitive relation ('grahaṇa'), between a 'grāhya' and a 'grāhaka'. It is the peculiar illumination of '*jnāna*' or awareness which reveals the subject, the object and itself in an act of knowledge. It is sometimes said that from dead 'matter' is evolved 'life' which is not to be explained by the concept of matter alone. Similarly, from an unconsciously 'living' existence we see the growth of knowledge, reflection, and consciousness, which also is an entirely new mode of reality, and an unique addition to the mysteries of our universe. We ask, what is consciousness? and find that explanations attempted from a purely 'mechanistic' and 'vitalistic' stand-point fail to account for this new reality, for, consciousness refers to something so different from anything else that it seems an utter impossibility to reduce it to terms other than itself.

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**V. S.* 8. 2. 9. 'Ahamiti śabdasya vyatirekāt'.

That consciousness is, by common consent, entitled to our most rational consideration, is evidenced by the growing interest taken in such questions even by eminent scientists who had till now claims only to non-philosophical speculations. Notwithstanding the differences in the view-point or the results of their enquiry, consciousness has come to be regarded as a stock-in-trade not only of the metaphysician and the psychologist, but also of the physicist and the biologist, for the simple reason that it is *prima facie* the most direct and the nearest reality of which any one who has ever introspected is most immediately aware. In other words, it is an inexpugnable datum and the source of all our thoughts regarding all our objects of different interests. All the objects with which the various non-philosophical sciences deal are objects principally in the *consciousness* of the scientist.

### *Need of a Systematic Study of the Problem of Consciousness in Hindu Philosophy*

Even a brief survey of the bold and vigorous thinking attempted in India during the long period beginning with the time of the Upaniṣads down to the end of the 17th century A.D. will convince any student of the history of Indian thought that, inspite of the lapses of some of the later thinkers such as the wrangling between the various systems, or mere enthusiasm for supremacy over rival sects or schools, the Hindu thinkers had thrashed out almost all philosophical concepts which they could have possibly evolved. They were daring enough to have carried their reasoning to its farthest logical conclusions. Discussions on almost all conceivable problems relating to all possible spheres of knowledge and action, metaphysics, psychology, logic, epistemology, morals and law, phonetics and yoga, magic and medicine, all lie intertwined in one big tangle of plants without much modern distinction of discipline or

systematic separation. This rich nursery may be the source of valuable small gardens, for in this vast jungle of Indian philosophical systems, many a thick plant is overgrown in restricted space. While here and there much weed is seen, a few corners are congested with excessive growth; these plants need replanting in a wider area so that they can blossom in their full beauty.

Of all the problems nearest to the human heart, the problem of his own being and nature has certainly been one. It is a commonplace to assert that at least in so far as anything is related to man, everything is what it is, because man is what he is, i.e., a conscious and cognitive being. Even if there is something outside man's consciousness it is as good as non-existent (so far as he is concerned) in as much as it does not enter into any relation with him at all. Thus all the problems of man's life are in this sense a problem only of his consciousness of them. Hence it is easy to explain the thought and energy which Hindu seekers have devoted to the unravelling of the mystery of consciousness. We meet in their treatment of the problem of consciousness almost all possible variety and shades of opinion, beginning with the total denial of it, to the making of consciousness the very *prius* and the centre of all reality. Between these two extremes of total denial and foundational affirmation, we have a variety of intermediate positions and view-points. Thinkers beginning with the Upaniṣadic sages, together with Gautama, Kapila and Bādarāyaṇa, down to Śankara and Rāmānuja, Śrīdhara and Jayanta, have given such conflicting answers to the problems of consciousness that there is hardly an answer which is not as familiar as its counter-answer, or a solution which is not so unsatisfactory as not to give rise to a fresh problem in turn. Now that very valuable and pioneer work has already been done by eminent scholars like Sir S. Radhakrishnan and others, there is a need of a special study in the

language of modern metaphysics of single problems such as the "nature of consciousness", and others with a view to re-thinking and representing the Hindu contribution towards a possible solution of them.

*The Method of Enquiry*

During the last fifty years of our intellectual relationship with different cultures, our horizon of knowledge of the wisdom and philosophy of the different races has very much widened. To-day we know more of the distinctive wisdom and thought of the Egyptian, the Persian, the Chinese and the Indian. As usual, this new era of cultural contact brought with it more enthusiasm than caution, more sympathy than precision, and it manifested itself more and more in comparative studies in which superficial similarities of thought, far removed in place, time and circumstances, were passed on as if they were essentially identical. It has been a craze with scholars to take up comparative works, and to interpret the old and the dissimilar into the modern and the familiar, without strict adherence to the original and the unfamiliar. Thus, in the early stages of the comparative study of Indian and Western philosophies, it was a favourite theme with scholars to liken and identify the Vedāntic Advaitism of India* which has in itself many varieties, with the Hegelian Idealism of the West, without much attempt at preserving the distinctive individuality of either. Attempts are sometimes made to discover all the modern physics in the 'Vaiśeṣika Sūtras, of Kaṇāda, while the Sūtras of Patañjali have been taken as either a higher course in modern psychotherapy, or just a treatise on the occult science of the mastery of elemental forces for the enjoyment of worldly gain and power. References in the Upaniṣads to the limitations of intellect have

*See Deussen's Essay on '*Vedānts Plato and Kant.*'

been likened to the Bergsonian "return to the instinct" and to the complete distrust of reason. The same has been done with the Nyāya and the modern logic, in which resemblances in syllogisms etc. have been picked up to the exclusion of their individualities in the formulation of problems.

The above is not intended to convey either that there is no real similarity between the rich philosophies of any two cultures, or that the fundamental and the eternal problems of human thought, their reaction upon man's mind, and the expression of these reactions are not in some ways similar. To do this would be to do violence to the very postulate of the unity and the objectivity of human reason and to believe in the utter impossibility of a universal metaphysics. On the contrary, we have striking instances of beautiful parallels in thoughts as far removed in time and circumstances, as William James and the Buddhist, the modern sceptic like Hume and the ancient Mādhyamika like Nāgārjuna or Dharmakīrti, the subjective Idealist of to-day and the Yogācāra Idealist of yore. Not infrequently, while going through an ancient Hindu or Buddhist text, one comes across problems, set forth and argued in a manner which could not be distinguished from the manner of their treatment in one of the most modern texts.

But what is of importance is that a thorough understanding of any two different philosophies in their distinctive individualities should precede comparison: otherwise the comparative study, based on superficial similarities, would be in danger of degenerating into an easy distortion of both. The reason is that each single philosophy of a particular culture has its own soul. It has an individual genius which creates, as well as reacts to, a problem in its own special way. We cannot afford to ignore this factor of individuality in a system of thought without effacing the special features of that philosophy.

It is necessary, therefore, to try to discover—as a preliminary step for a perhaps later stage of synthesis—the distinctive and unique traits of each system of thought representative of a culture before an attempt is made towards a *rapprochement* of them. The method of individual study and contrast, which provides a new approach to the study of comparative philosophy is, therefore, better suited to our present state of knowledge of different philosophies than the one of superficial and slipshod similarities.*

I have, therefore, made an independent and critical study of the Hindu view of consciousness in its individual and distinctive traits as found scattered in Hindu texts without trying to present it either as a modern or as a Western view. It has also been tried so far as practicable, to preserve the Hindu methodological frame of discussion '*Samvāda*' in the formulation of the separate issues. Certain fundamental questions regarding the nature of consciousness which are themselves neither Hindu nor ancient have been discussed in their original setting. Comparisons have at this stage been deliberately avoided lest they may unnecessarily cloud issues already complicated and involved in the unfamilar back-ground of Indian Scholasticism. The aim, therefore, has been to present a picture of the essentially and solely Hindu view of consciousness along with the characteristic features which distinguish it in broad relief from its Western ally.†

*A Brief Statement of the Problem*

What is the problem of consciousness? Is there any problem at all? Such and others are the questions which must be asked now. To understand the nature and the problem of consciousness, it is best to begin

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* *Vide* B. Heimann, I.W.P., A Study in Contrast.

†Examples will be found in the last chapter.

with an analysis of the nature of our daily experience of cognition. The fact of awareness, if we reflect, would be found to consist of a number of factors which invariably play a part whenever there is any manifestation of cognition or awareness. These factors are (1) the objects of the external world '*viṣayas*', (2) our external sense-organs, '*indriyas*', (3) the internal organ, or the mind '*Manas*' which is the connecting link between the external senses and the cogniser, and lastly, there is the agent or the cogniser, the '*Ātman*' who regards himself as the knower, and to whom the entire flux of cognitions that constitute our mental life belong, and in whom they inhere as a support or substratum.

The above is just a common-sense statement of the factors involved in our daily cognitions. A little more reflection will show that the agent or the 'I' can be further split up in an act of self-introspection into two selves. The statement 'I know myself', suggests two cognisers, the cogniser as cognised, and the cogniser as the cogniser, and this process of 'self-splitting' can be continued *ad infinitum*. One may, therefore, posit two cognisers instead of one: the one, the empirical or the psychological self which alternately becomes both the subject and the object of cognition, and the other, the transcendental subject, which is never caught in an act of knowledge as a 'known' but which always remains behind as the ultimate knower and the subject of all our cognitions. We have seen that awareness involves a duality of subject and object, but this duality does not seem to favour the cognition of the cogniser except in the usual psychological way. The question, therefore, suggests itself, if this duality is a permanent feature of our consciousness. Is it an ultimate principle of all consciousness at all stages inherent in its essential nature, or is there an end to it at some stage where the subject or the non-dual consciousness alone shines in its own nature '*Svarūpa*' without any other object as either

qualifying or determining its nature? In short, is there an non-dual, immediate, and distinctionless consciousness, which is universal and unchanging, or is all consciousness always one of distinctions, changing and particular in the form of 'this is this'? This would be one of the fundamental questions about the nature of consciousness.

But above all, what consciousness in itself is? What is '*Samvit*', '*Anubhūti*' or '*Upalabdhi*' in itself? Is it the '*guṇa*' of one '*dravya*' alone, or is it itself a '*dravya*'? What brings about the situation of a cognition? Is it a combination of all the factors of '*viṣaya*', '*indriya*', '*manas*', and the '*Ātman*', or is it due to the eternal and essentially 'cit' nature only of the *Ātman*? The physical body alone cannot be the principle of consciousness because consciousness is not found in the dead body. No combination of unconscious entities can generate consciousness. In consciousness every bit of consciousness must be conscious, even as every molecule of matter is matter. Nor can '*Prāna*' be the principle of awareness, for innumerable living beings in whom life-breath is functioning show no sign of awareness or cognition. Is 'Buddhi' the cause of consciousness? If so, what is the 'Buddhi' itself? Is it itself a conscious or an unconscious entity? Does consciousness belong to it by essence as heat to fire, or is consciousness only adventitious to it as the red colour is to a baked jar? Could it not be that 'Buddhi' too is just an instrument like the body and the sense organs, in which case, the quality of cognition does not belong to it? It may be only a fine instrument of subtle matter, which, though not in itself conscious, yet assumes psychical and conscious attributes by reason of its capacity to take a reflection of consciousness.

Again, is Ātman, then, consciousness? Is there no difference between the two—the Ātman and the consciousness? or, is consciousness only the quality

'guṇa', and not the 'svabhāva' or essence of it? Is consciousness self-luminous or non-luminous? Is it eternal and unproduced, inactive and unmodifiable, or is it produced, changing, dynamic and modifiable?

Lastly, what is Unconsciousness and how are the two opposites of the 'cit' and the 'acit' related? Are there in reality, two substances, the one permanently conscious, and the other permanently unconscious, or is there only one substance, 'cit' or 'acit' which modifies itself into its opposite? If there are two absolutely opposite substances with nothing in common between them, how can they at all come together? If there is only one substance, conscious or unconscious, difficulties arise with regard to the origin of the one from the other, for; in actual experience we find both consciousness and unconsciousness, subject and object, forming part of one whole. Such are some of the problems concerning consciousness whose solution, as attempted in the investigations of the Hindu thinkers, is sought to be discovered in the following pages.

*The Scope of the Enquiry.*

A word should be added here about the scope and the limitations of the present study. The present enquiry into the nature of consciousness is restricted purely to a logical consideration of the metaphysical nature and characteristics of what consciousness in itself is. Thus the subject-matter of the enquiry is the nature of consciousness, and the view-point is metaphysical; though the problem has been tackled in its various aspects, the aim is throughout the ascertainment of the ultimate nature of consciousness. This enquiry into the nature of consciousness should not, however, be confused with allied questions, which, though related to it have been treated as distinct and separate, lest the scope of the present euquiry is unnecessarily widened and the clarity of issues involved is lost. The problem of consciousness,

for instance, is separate from a similar problem of the theories of knowledge, of the means of proof, and of the theories of truth and error, each one of which is by itself a separate issue and should be treated as such. It does not mean that ultimately there can be any rigid separation of one from the other but only that the present work is occupied merely with the problems of the nature of consciousness as such.

# CHAPTER II

## THE PRE-SYSTEMATIC AND SEMI-PHILOSOPHICAL BACK-GROUND

### *The Cosmic Nature of the Pre-Upaniṣadic Enquiry*

Our enquiry on the ultimately metaphysical nature of consciousness pertains to the subjective field of an introspective reflection on what man within his own self essentially is. It is only within his own inner and subjective being that a man is first aware of consciousness, directly and most immediately. Questions like 'What is consciousness'? and 'Why am I conscious'? presuppose a distinction already acquired between a conscious and an unconscious existence, and between a purely physical and unreflective 'being' and a psychical and reflective 'functioning.' Consciousness is prior to reflection and does not wait for its generation till it is reflected upon; the reflective stage necessarily comes later.

Man, in his intellectual search for the nature of Reality starts with the conquest of the external world first, for as declared in the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad,* man, to begin with, looks outward because his senses are outgoing.* It is only in the second stage of his enquiry that he comes back from the outside to the inside. Thus, early thoughts of man were naturally cosmic. His senses went out, peeped into the surrounding vastness with humility and bewilderment, and wondered about the mystery of planets and seasons, in fact about everything that was more powerful than himself and influenced his life. At this early stage, he hardly looked inside or wondered at his own self. It was not till much later that the distinction

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* *Kaṭha. Up. 4.* 1. 'Parāñci khāni vyatṛṇat svayumbhūs, tasmāt parāñ paśyati nāntarātman.'

between the external and the internal or between the physical and the psychical came to be drawn.

The earliest enquiry was, therefore, about the nature of the universe as a whole, animate and inanimate, and its scope was not yet limited to any special feature of the universe. In the Ṛgvedic period in which atmosphere, minerals, plants and beasts are no less real and alive than men, it was inevitable that enquiry should have been directed towards the discovery of the essence of all of them, rather than of any one of them in particular.

It is one of the characteristics of Indian thought that at every step it thinks of reality as a whole and as a complete cosmos. It does not divide reality by analysing it into water-tight compartments. According to this cosmic attitude towards reality, everything is a symbol and a part of the whole, and as such, every bit is filled with the same essential whole. The Reality is one compact mass of which there is no outside or inside. 'That is complete, this is complete, from the complete comes out the complete.'*

The outside cosmos, the universe of the stellar, the atmospheric and the terrestrial phenomena, is not entirely outside man, for where all is all, and is every moment complete, there is no distinction of the outside or the inside, for man is a part and parcel of the whole. Each single thing, if we concentrate deeply upon it, can reveal the all, for it is a microcosmic picture of the whole. That is why it is sometimes held that during the course of man's progress and evolution of knowledge, there is never any absolutely new ground to be discovered, or an entirely unfamiliar place to be reached. All discovery, revelation and knowledge are only cases of re-discovery and re-cognition of what has been eternally present for ever.

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* *Bṛh. Up.* Śāntipāṭha. 5.1.1. 'Pūraṇamadaḥ pūrṇam idam, pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate.

*Transition from the outside to the inside*

Yet historically, as thought developed and reflection and emphasis took the place of the naïve wonder of the earliest stages, attention was diverted from mere observation of the outer facts and phenomena of nature to the inner forces or the principle underlying them. Man now begins to peep into the inside of things, and inquires into the wherefore and the regulative principle of things. But the attitude of enquiry is still objective and cosmic. By the 'inner' is not yet meant exclusively the 'inner' in man. It is the inner of all things, and the fundamental reality of anything that is inquired into rather than the essential nature of man's own being. At this second stage of the enquiry, it is the life force or the essence of the special functions of things in general that is inquired into, and not the special function either of a particular phenomenon in nature or in man. Man is inherently no more important than any other animate being (an attitude which has been a characteristic of Hindu thought in general), and within him, too, no particular function as such is taken to be more fundamental than the other, as is found later on in the Upaniṣads. Neither man alone nor any special feature of him is yet the centre of interest. The enquiry is not yet in terms of either consciousness or mind but only in terms of the specific functions of phenomena in general and of the moving power behind them, irrespective of their being animate or inanimate. In short, we discern in this second stage of reflection an advance from a state of mere observation of the variety of facts and happenings in Nature to a concept of a unitary principle or law, which is specially glorified in the Vedas by the name of "*Ṛta*".

"Everything that is ordered in the universe has *Ṛta* for its principle."* '*Ṛta*' as an underlying dynamic

* Radhakrishnan. *Indian Philosophy* Vol. I. p. 79.

force is at the back of all the phenomena in Nature. It is greater than the concept of the gods, even greater than 'Varuṇa' himself, for; being the immanent, functional force in the universe, it is more inner and fundamental. '*Ṛta*' compels every animate and inanimate being to follow the law of its own existence. It commands winds to blow, waters to flow, and men to know. Because '*Ṛta*' as the cosmic immanent force regulates all the specific functioning of the animate and the inanimate nature, it underlies the human function of knowing too. "It is by force of '*Ṛta*' that human brains function."* Man 'knows' by the driving force of the same immanent power which moves fire to burn and rivers to flow. Just as all other beings have to fulfil their allotted functions, so has man too to fulfil his own special function, which is to know ('*saṁ-vit*'), in the literal and the wider meaning of knowing together, (from '*sam*'—con, '*vid*'-sciousness), i.e. knowing in all its relatedness, because of its functioning as a part of the universal functioning of '*Ṛta*'.†

In this Pre-Upaniṣadic period, the nature of reflection not being anthropo-centric or psychological, we have no special term for the specific function of man's knowing or consciousness ; but, the term 'kratu' most probably from the root '*kṛ*', which means 'to fulfil one's function' may psychologically come fairly near to 'consciousness, in the sense of 'fulfilling one's function' at the level of man. That this functioning on the special human plain is called '*kratu*' is demonstrated in *Śat. Brāh.* 4.1.4.1. 'when a man wishes, may I do that, may I have that, that is '*kratu*': when he attains that, that is '*Dakṣa*'.‡ It is the same term '*kratu*' which is later on changed

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* B. Heimann. *Indian and Western Philosophy*, p. 35.

† Ibid. p. 77.

‡ *Śat. Brāh.* 4.1.4.1. 'sa yadeva manasā kāmayata idam me syāt idam kurviyeti sa eva kratur atha yadasmai tat samṛdhyate sa dakṣo'

into '*manas*' and '*prajñā*' in the general sense of desiring, willing and remembering etc.*

*The Nature of the Ultimate Reality in Ṛgveda*

What then is the Pre-Upaniṣadic reflection on the nature of the ultimate reality, and what clue does it offer for an understanding of the later development of the philosophy of consciousness ?

In answer to the above, we have to say that there is not much of strictly metaphysical speculation in the Vedas except the concept of an immanent and universal reality, which is emerging as the basic unitary principle underlying the forces of the cosmos, and which contains latent potentialities of giving rise to fundamental philosophical problems later on. From an interpretation of the famous Ṛg Vedic hymn of creation,† we can have some idea of the earliest philosophical legacy over which was constructed later on the vast super-structure of the Upaniṣadic and the later systematic reflections on the nature of consciousness. The hymn declares '*na asat āsīt no sat āsīt tadānim.*' 'Then there was neither Being nor non-Being,' and again. '*Kāmas tadagre samavartatādhi manaso retaḥ prathamaṁ yad āsīt. Kato bandhum asati niravidan hṛdi pratīsyā kavayo manīsā*', i.e., then for the first time there arose '*Kāmas*' which had the primeval germ of '*manas*' within it. It adds significantly that "the sages searching in their hearts discovered in 'non-being', the connecting bond of 'being'." Though it is not quite clear what is meant by saying that '*Kāma*' is the foremost germ of 'mind', for it is usually the mind that generates '*Kāma*' and not vice-versa, yet reading the verse along with its first

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* *Ait. Up.* 3. 2. 'sajñānam, ajñānam, vijñānam, prajñānam medhā, dṛṣṭiḥ, dhṛtiḥ, matiḥ, manīṣā, jūtiḥ, smṛtiḥ, saṁkalpaḥ, kratuḥ, asu, kāmaḥ, vaśaḥ, sarvāṇy-eva etāni, prajñānasya nāma dheyāni bhavanti."

† *Ṛg Veda.* X. 129.

commentary in *Śat. Brāh.* X. 5. 3. 1-3,* we can find here an embryonic suggestion for a future philosophy of consciousness. '*Kāma*' here certainly does not mean desire in the ordinary empirical sense. It rather refers to a cosmic, central and a unitary 'principle of productivity', or a fecundating power which is as yet neither mind nor non-mind, but is only an indiscriminate fullness of potentiality throbbing to become something definite and finite and fermenting to manifest itself later on as 'mind' or 'consciousness'. It was in short a cosmic urge of the 'potentiality' to manifest itself.

But this is all that the sages say about it. Beyond this, they do not go. It is not mentioned whether this 'root reality' is conscious or unconscious. In fact, the definite assertion that it was neither being nor non-being, which contradicts the other statement that the sages found the root of 'being' in 'non-being', should definitely suggest that it is a peculiar kind of 'being' and is quite different from any ordinary and definitised 'being'. The attribution of contradictory predicates to it might suggest that in reality no predicates describe it. It must not, however, be understood that by 'non-existence' is meant 'absolute non-existence', for while the term 'being' ordinarily denotes that which is differentiated by name and form, the term 'nonbeing' denotes the same previous to its differ- entiation. The Brahman, previous to the origin of the world, is called 'non-being' in a secondary sense of the term. The unconditioned existence which is devoid of indicative marks, and

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* Śat. Brāh. X. 5.3.1-3. 'Neva vā idam agre asadāsīt neva sadāsit, āsīdiva vā idam agre nevāsit tadha tan mana evāsa ; nāsadāsīn no sadāsīttadānim iti neva hi sanmano nevāsat tadidam manaḥ sṛṣṭamāvirabubhūṣat niruktatarm mūrtataram tadātmānam anvaicchattat tapo-atapyata.....tadyatkiṅcemani bhūtāni manasā saṁkalpayanti.'

is necessarily in capable of being thought of in a way other than 'via negativa' is equal to non-existence.*

'Asat' is then, not absolute nothing, but only "not-yet-something". It is similar to the later Buddhistic idea of 'Nirvāṇa' and the 'Śūnya', or the 'Vedānta' idea of 'Brahman' and the 'Avyakta' of the 'Sāṅkhya'. It has the reality of the shapeless, and the formless, but has also fullness. 'Sat' here means single shapes and forms of definite sizes, i.e, congealed 'mūrtis' as contrasted with its polar idea of the formless and of the possibilities of all forms in 'Asat'.

What, then, is the meaning of the statement that the roots of '*Sat*' lie in '*Asat*'? The answer is that it may simply mean that the formed comes out of the formless, the definite out of the indefinite, and also that the one cannot be without the other, both being polar realities. While the formless '*asat*' shapes itself into the formed '*sat*', the formed '*sat*', after taking infinite forms, is finally 're-solved' into the original formless '*asat*'. The roots of 'sat' lie in '*asat*', as the roots of '*Māyā*' lie in '*Brahman*'. It has been a characteristic of Hindu thought to assert that the multiplicity of single evolutes and finite shapes have their basis in a primeval essence, from which they emanate and into which they ultimately lapse, and that this root reality can be apprehended in terms of polar attributes of both '*śūnya*' and '*śuna*', emptiness and fullness. '*Asat*', therefore, stands for the creative and unmanifested against the manifested and formed. The same is meant later in *Yoga Bhāṣya*†

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* *S. B.* 2. 1. 17. 'na hi ayam atyantāsattvābhiprāyeṇa prāgutpatteḥ kāryasya asapvyadadeśaḥ'.

*S. B.* 1. 4. 15. 'tasmāt nāmarūpavyākṛtavastuviṣayaḥ prāyeṇa sacchabdaḥ prasiddhaḥ'.

Also, *Kaṭha. Up.* 6. 13. tasya nirupādhikasya aliṅgasya sadasadādi-pratyaya-viṣayatva-varjitasyātmanaḥ tattvabhāvo bhavati"

† *Y. B.* 2. 23. 'dṛśyasya svātmabhūtam api puruṣapratyaya-apekṣam darśanam dṛśyadharmatvena bhavati, tathā puruṣasya-anātmabhūtam api dṛśyapratyaya-apekṣam puruṣadharmatvena-

where both '*Dṛś*' and '*Dṛśya*' previous to their contact exist only in potentialities of being the 'seer' and the 'seen' and not as either the 'seen' or the 'seer'.

The '*Asat*' is higher than the '*Sat*', for, to be without a particular from is to exist in the possibilities of all forms, which necessarily forbids any definite characterisation of the *Asat.* That is the reason why early thinkers have called the root of all being by contradictory names. The ultimate reality which is infinite, cannot be called either '*Kāma*' or 'mind' or 'Being' or 'Non-being'. To call it a 'being' is to call it a definite 'being', which it is not, and to call it 'non-being' is to deny it, which is not true. 'The absolute reality which is at the back of the whole world cannot be characterised by us as either existent or non-existent.'* It can therefore be neither denied absolutely nor affirmed empirically.

The only knowledge which we have about it is that it *is*, and is not *yet* any particular thing.

To recapitulate, our first consideration was the meaning of the statement that '*Kāma*' is the root reality out of which is born 'mind.' We next considered what could be meant by the statement that the roots of '*sat*' lie in '*Asat*'. Our next question is, 'where is the ultimate and the root reality to be discovered? Where is its locus? Where can it be looked for? And we have a significant clue in the statement that the sages searched for it in their hearts. That the sages had to search for it "in their hearts",† and not outside suggests that the ultimate reality might be finally an inner reality, or be possessed of 'mind' or consciousness as its essential nature; for later on, the 'Ātman' is declared as '*hṛdyantar jyotiḥ*'

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eva darśanam-avabhāsate, 'darśanaśaktiḥ-eva-adarśanam-iti eke, sarvabodhasamarthaḥ prāk, pravṛtteḥ puruṣo na paśyati, sarvakāryakaraṇasamarthan dṛśyaṁ tadā na dṛṣyat iti'.

* Radha Krishnan. *I. P. Vol.* I p. 101

† *Yajurveda* 32. 8. Venastat paśyan nihitam guhā.

in the Upaniṣads, and later still a pure consciousness (cit) is regarded as the essential nature of 'Brahman' in the Vedānta and of 'Puruṣa' in the 'Sāṅkhya-Yoga'. That this highest reality (which was the primeval root in the Vedas) contained within it the seed of mind, which later on became the source of differentiation might also suggest that, in the last resort, this ultimate root reality has something of the nature of primeval consciousness of which it cannot be divested, though it cannot in any way be equated with what is known to us as empirical consciousness.

To conclude, we have in the Vedas an elastic frame of the development of the later idealistic tendencies of the gradual discovery of a universal and an inner principle as the basic and the fundamental reality which finally culminates in the Upaniṣadic doctrine of the Absolute 'Ātman.'

*Transition from the Pre-Upaniṣadic to the Upaniṣadic reflection*

We saw that in the *Ṛg Veda* efforts were made to speculate about the ultimate reality which was left uncharacterised. This effort is of importance in as much as it indicates that, during the Vedic period, the centre of thought had shifted from the plurality of phenomenon to the concept of a unitary and fundamental principle as the source and substance underlying the variety of facts and phenomena in Nature. While the concept of '*Ṛta*' and the reflections in the 'hymn of creation' and other hymns, point to the discovery of a universal and fundamental principle of Reality, the reference to the "searching in the hearts" indicates the 'inwardness' of this principle.

But the Vedic thought which had begun to look inside for the fundamental and universal reality, had left the exact nature of this inner reality undeveloped. It stopped at the concept of a mere existence of a central principle the exact nature of which was not

definitely ascertained. But the concept of mere 'Being' has no philosophical stability about it. No thinking can stop at the characterisation of reality as mere Being; it stands self-condemned, for it fails to excite or stimulate our intellectual curiosity. The mere 'that' of existence to which the Vedic sages referred, did not satisfy the Upaniṣadic seers. They further asked the 'what' of 'that', and it was with this further 'what' of the reality that the Upaniṣadic sages concerned themselves.

It is here that the Upaniṣads take up the thread of the enquiry, and develop rationally and systematically what has since been universally acknowledged as the eternal contribution of the Upaniṣadic philosophy to the Idealistic thought of the world. Their two declarations, firstly, that the ultimate reality is an eternally conscious principle composed of pure Intelligence and Bliss, and secondly, that this ultimate reality is no other than one's ownself, (Ātman,) distinguish the Upaniṣadic thought from the Vedic speculations; the latter had left the ultimate reality uncharacterised both with regard to its essence 'svarūpa' and with regard to its relation to man.

*Consciousness in the Upaniṣads*

We find in *Ṛg Veda* 1. 164. 37, a casual introspection, 'what thing I truly am I know not'.* This is, perhaps, the earliest instance of a man's reflection upon his ownself. This casual reflection of the Vedas can be taken as the starting point of the serious and strenuous meditation of the Upaniṣads on the nature of the Self. 'Who am I'? ('Ko'ham',) and 'which is the Atman'?, are the insistent questions which clamour for answer in the Upaniṣads.

Historically, it is for the first time perhaps, that in the Aitareya Āraṇyaka we find a determined effort to reflect systematically on the different stages of the

* *Ṛg. Veda* 1.164.37. 'na vā jānāmi yad iva idam asmi'.

development of consciousness in the universe. Here a beginning is made in the successive gradation of reality on the basis of degrees of sensibility and intelligence discovered in plants, beasts and men. Representing the earliest metaphysics of consciousness in Hindu thought, the passage in the Āraṇyaka deserves to be quoted in full inspite of its length. We read:*— "There are herbs and trees and all that is animal, and he knows the Ātman gradually developing in them. For in herbs and trees, sap only is seen but 'citta' is seen in animated beings. Among animated beings, again, the Ātman develops gradually; and in man, again, the Ātman develops gradually, for he is most endowed with 'prajñā'. He says what he has known, he sees what he has known, he knows what is to happen to-morrow, he knows the visible and the invisible world, by means of the mortal he desires the immortal. Thus is he endowed. With regard to other animals, hunger and thirst are a kind of understanding, but they do not say what they have known, they do not know what is to happen to-morrow, etc. They go so far and no further." Now the question is, what is the true nature of this Ātman which is seen to develop gradually in the plant, the animal and the man? How does the knowledge of the Ātman gradually arise? Such are the questions to which the Upaniṣadic sages who have taken the Ātman to be a 'rahasya', or an altogether new concept and who, more or less exclusively, have devoted themselves to the mystery of the Ātman, seek to provide an answer.

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1 A. A. 2. 3. 2. 'tasya ya ātmānamāvistarām vedāśnute hāvirbhūyaḥ. Oṣadhivanaspatayo yacca kiñca prāṇabhṛtsu ātmānamāvistarām veda. Ośadhivanaspatiṣu hi raso dṛśyate cittam prāṇabhṛtsu. Prāṇabhrtsu tvevāvistāramātmā teṣu hi raso' pi dṛṣyate na cittamitareṣu. Puruṣe tvevāvistāramātmā sa hi prajñānena sampannatamo vijñātam vadati, vijñātam paśyati, vadaśvastanam, veda lokalokau martyenāmṛtamīpastyevam sampannaḥ. Athetareṣām paśūnāmaśanāpipāse evābhivijñānam, na vijñātam vadanti, na vijñātam paśyanti, na viduḥ śvastanam na lokalokau ta etāvanto bhavanti yathāprajñam hi sambhavāḥ'.

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, Prajāpati unfolds successively this '*Rahasyam*' when Indra and Virocana approach him for knowledge of the immortal-self.* The Ātman is progressively, and step by step identified with the body consciousness, the dream consciousness, and the deep sleep unconsciousness till finally it is declared to be the one which persists unaffected through all these conditions of the empirical existence. A similar physico-psychological method is adopted in the Taittirīya,† and here too, the successive unfolding of the essence of the Ātman reaching the 'Yājñavalkya's *Vijñānamaya*', finally ends in its characterisation as *Ānandamaya*.

*Progressive deduction of the nature of the Ātman*

While the term 'Ātman' is taken in the Ṛg Veda as an essential 'rūpa' or the predominating form of anything in general, in the Upaniṣads it is taken exclusively as the essential in man. The concept of the Ātman is *quasi a label* which is given in different periods in different contents. It has a path, a 'mārga' of its own development by definite stages. The doctrine of Ātman has not only a new content, but also represents a new method of thinking. The concept is deduced as indicated above, by a kind of physico-psychological method in contrast with the ontological approach of the earlier period. Each successive stage of development shows a deepening of the same scientific method. It is important to note that even in this new physico-psychological methodology, which at every fresh step tends to make the Ātman more and more microcosmic, its identification with the earlier cosmic concept of the Brahman is never relinquished. In this new development of the doctrine of the Ātman;

* *Ch. Up.* 8. 7. 1 ff.

† *Tait. Up.* 3. 2-6 'annam brahmetivyajānāt' prāṇo, mano, vijñānam, ānando brahmeti vyajānāt.

there is no cutting away from the roots of the past, and the equation of the microcosmic with the macrocosmic, once discovered and justified, is ever afterwards retained. The Ātman, therefore, even when it is the abstract seer as a subject, is one with the cosmic and the universal.

*The Ātman as the body*

In man the Ātman is first identified with the body. Body is then, the essence of man, and is the person as a whole.* But soon it is realised that the body which is perishable and is not subtle, cannot be absolutely the highest in man.

*The Ātman as 'Prāṇa'*

We, therefore, come to the next step of our enquiry; it is now declared that 'Prāṇa' is the Ātman. 'Prāṇa' is less divisible and more subtle. It vitalises and perpetually moves the whole body. The sense-organs cannot work without 'Prāṇa'.† The 'Prāṇa' is superior to the body and the sense-organs on account of psychological reasons too. Hence 'Prāna' is entitled to be regarded as the Ātman. It is regarded as immortal and also as 'satyasya satyam',‡ because it is untiring and life-giving. The cosmic parallel to this new truth of 'Prāṇa' as the Ātman is 'Vāyu', so that, in the concept of the 'Prāṇa-Vāyu' at this stage, we have only a new content of the older and the ever-affirmed identity of the microcosm with the macrocosm.

*The Ātman as 'prajñā'*

The third stage of the development of the content of the Ātman is marked by a strikingly new postulate of the unity of conscious functions. The Ātman is now declared as 'prajñā'. This 'prajñā', to begin with, is just a receptacle of the mechanical flowing together

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* *Taitt. 2. 1.*, and *Ch. Up.* 8. 7. 4.

† *Bṛh. 6. 1. 7.*, Ch. Up. 5.1.6.

‡ *Bṛh.* 2.3.6.

of all the perceptual organs into one.* The higher stage where consciousness is to be conceived as a spiritual activity of thinking has not yet arrived. The 'prajñātman, i. e. the receptacle of the psychological activity of the sense-organs is not perceived in deep sleep and fainting, in which condition man only lives and breathes, but is not conscious of the sensory functions.† But since this 'prajñā' is identical with 'Prāṇa', it is conceived not only as a meeting place of all functions, but also as always present.‡

*The Ātman as subject*

Next, the Ātman is conceived as an active subject of perception, as an essential seer, in contrast with the old role of 'prajñā' as a mere receptacle of all impressions. The Ātman now becomes the internal subject which is self-dependent and free.§ The Ātman as a subject, is now so removed from 'prajñā' and so independent that it can move freely from world to world.$ On the other hand, the Ātman is localized, as it were, and is not only the permeating self, but also the inner self, the inner ruler.

Furthermore, the Ātman teaching at this stage has developed from the physico-psychological to the psycho-magical level. 'He who knows that, becomes that'. To know an object is to become one with it. 'He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman'.‖ 'I am '*sarvam*''. We come here to an identity of the two meanings of the grasping of reality, viz. grasping by knowing and grasping by becoming what one knows. The belief that one becomes what one knows,

* *Kauṣ.* Up. 3. 2., 3. 7.

† *Kauṣ.* Up. 3. 4., 4. 19.

‡ *Bṛh.* 2. 1. 16f.

§ *Bṛh.* 3. 4. 1f., 3. 7. 3ff. Kauṣ. Up. 3. 8 f.

$ *Bṛh.* 4. 3. 11. ff.

‖ *Muṇḍ.* Up. 3. 2. 9. Ch. Up. 2. 21. 4. also 'tam yātha yathopāsate tad-eva bhavati'

has been a development of the primitive magical ideas of the *Brāhmanas,* and is justified because the micro-macrocosmic identification still and always holds good. The inner Ātman, which is consciousness 'par excellence', is also the Ātman of all. It is out of the '*vijñānamaya puruṣa*' that all external objects emanate, and as such, all objects are essentially of the same nature (sarūpāḥ), like sparks of fire. The Ātman as the subject is, therefore, not an individual but an Absolute or the universal Subject.

*The Ātman as 'cit'*

The Ātman has so far been considered as an unperishing and eternally existing reality, which exists by its own right and unconditionally In other words, it has been considered as the '*satyam*'. Next is the Ātman considered from the aspect merely of the intellectual functions. The Ātman concept develops from gross to subtle and from subtle to still more subtle, till it ends with the last member of the psychological series, the concept of pure 'Cit'.

In connection with the psychological and intellectual function of other organs, the Ātman asks 'Ko'ham',† and finds that it is no more directly concerned with the function of the senses but is the seer of the seeing, the hearer of the hearing and so forth.‡ It is the pure subject consciousness which is not to be confounded with the individual selfhood. By 'cit' is here meant a kind of purity of immaterialisation, a kind of flame without smoke, and far from being identified with the individual thought, it is a kind of over-thought.

The Ātman as the pure consciousness, is now the fundamental and the basic reality. Pure 'cit'

* *Muṇḍ. Up.* 2. 1.
*Bṛh. Up.* 2. 1. 20.

† *Ait. Up.* 3. 1. f.

‡ *Bṛh.* 3. 4. 2., 3. 7. 23., 3. 8. 11.

exists independently and by its own right. It existing, all phenomenal reality of the earth and the sky, life and 'prāṇa' exists. Even if no phenomenal reality of the sun, moon, the sense-organs, and the 'manas' is manifest, the absolute consciousness still exists. It exists as the '*svayam-jyotiḥ*', through the light of which all else shines.*

This eternal Ātman, consisting through and through of pure consciousness, shines unconditionally. Like a lump of salt which consists through and through of savour, the Ātman is through and through conscious.† The keynote of this Absolute and unconditional consciousness is that, though it has no consciousness of particular objects and is not characterised by the distinction of subject and the object, yet it is not unconscious. It is a non-dual and unitary consciousness without the consciousness of differentiation like the consciousness of a man embraced by his wife. This eternal and unconditional consciousness which at times appears to lose consciousness, (as in deep sleep), does not in reality lose it, for it is constantly conscious. '*Paśyan vai na paśyati*'. Though seeing, it appears as if it does not see. It has no specific cognition, not because it ceases to be conscious, but because there are no objects separate from it which it can see.§ If the Ātman had not been unceasingly and unconditionally conscious, and if consciousness did actually become extinct, whence could it come back later on ?‖ It, therefore, appears not to see, because when the unity of the Ātman with the '*sarvam*' has been realised, and when there is nothing left beside itself, who shall see whom ?

To summarise, we come across in the Upaniṣadic doctrine of the Ātman, a rational idealism historically

* *Bṛh.* 4. 3. 1. ff.

† *Bṛh.* 4. 5. 13.

§ *Bṛh.* 4. 3. 23.

‖ *Bṛh.* 4. 3. 11-15.

perhaps the very first, and doctrinally, the most thorough-going and far-reaching in its beliefs and declarations of the basic reality of an absolute, unconditional and eternal consciousness, which exists as pure 'cit', undifferentiated by the distinction of the subject and the object. This pure and unconditional consciousness exists as the ultimate subject, as the pure knower who is never known in an act of knowledge, for "How can the knower indeed be known"?

We shall see how later on this ultimate and transcendental consciousness is either retained or entirely thrown over-board in the orthodox systems.

*Consciousness and Ānanda*

This characterisation of the ultimate reality which reaches its climax in the Absolute consciousness of Yajñavalkya's '*vijñānaghana*', and which is beyond the categories of time, space and causation, is yet not the last one. In this logico-psychological account of the Ātman, there is a gap from the side of religious consciousness and hence we are taken further to the final characterisation of it as Ānanda or Bliss.* The true nature of the Ātman is *saccidānanda*'. The concept of '*Cit*' and *Ānanda*, though arrived at by differet methods, are later on identified as ultimate qualities. Pure and absolute consciousness cannot be differentiated from 'Ānanda'. The 'Ānanda' is the same as 'Bhūman'.† The highest Ātman is 'Ānanda', because in it there is no want, no second, no more tension or limitation. The Brahman is 'Ānanda' as the last super-conscious stage and as absolutaly different from empirical consciousness.

The history of this postulate can be traced back to the '*svarga*' idea of the Brāhmaṇas where the eudemonistic tendency finds its expression through

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* *Bṛh.* 4. 3. 32-33. *Ch. Up.* 4. 10. 5. *Taitt. Up.* 2. 8., 3. 6. *Mūnd.* 2. 2-7.

† *Ch. Up.* 7. 23. 1., 7. 24. 1.

the concept of the *'Brahmaloka'* as the highest of all.* The worldly *'sukha'* is not eternal, for it is momentary and leads back to pain, and is therefore not permanently good. Only 'Ānanda' is positive and eternally good, for it is everlasting.

It is important to remember in this connection, that neither the absolute consciousness nor 'Ānanda' is identical with a mystic feeling suddenly and spontaneously arising in an ecstatic experience. This latest characterisation of the Ātman is only in continuation of the same scientific and rational method through which the highest has so far been deduced step by step, quite rationally and methodically developed from the *'annamaya'* to the *'vijñānamaya'* and from *'vijñānamaya'* to *'ānandamaya'*.

The question might be asked here if this characterisation of reality as bliss is absolutely final and ultimate. If so, how does it reconcile with the elsewhere and repeated characterisation of it as uncharacterisable. May it not be that Ānanda also is just a sheath among the sheaths, a stage, though the last one of all the describables, beyond which either there is no characterisation of it as anything, or it is described by contradictory qualities.† The state of bliss is final and last, but last only of the speakable, after which the region of silence begins from which all speech and mind must turn back. The trend of the Upaniṣadic findings into the nature of the ultimate reality is more towards indicating an inability of definite predications about it than a positive characterisation of it as Ānanda. Ānanda is to be taken only figuratively as pointing towards the highest among the successive characterisations, which characterisation itself ends at the stage of Ānanda not because it is the highest to be indicated to, but because the higher is no longer now

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* B. Heimann. *'S. Z. E. I. D.'* p. 84.

† *Kaṭha. Up.* 2. 14. *Ch. Up.* 3. 14. 3. *Kauṣ. Up.* 2. 20. f. *Bṛh.* 3. 8. 8. *Īśa.* 4. f.

describable. It is like what is later on known as the maxim of '*arundhatī-pradarśana-nyāya*', which consists in first showing the bright star near Arundhatī, then one nearer, and so on. Ānanda, thus, is the limit or the finality of our positive empirical grasping and not of the reality which transcends even this last of our limits. The Upaniṣads teach us of a principle of consciousness which differs so entirely from a state of consciousness which will be able to enjoy or feel Ānanda as not to be indicated by that name at all. This bliss is of a being which has no consciousness or feeling of any kind, and which is better designated as 'Silence' rather than as 'Ānanda', as in 'I teach you indeed, but you understand not, Silence is the Ātman.'*

It is clear that such an Absolute consciousness cannot be regarded as Ānanda in any empirical sense of the term. The term Ānanda is only to indicate that the nature of Reality is positive, and not negative. Reality is '*saccidānanda*'. It is '*sat*', because it is unchanging. It is '*cit*', means that it is not '*acit*' or '*Jaḍa*'. It is 'Ānanda', meaning that it cannot be of the nature of pain or discord, for all negation must have a basis in something positive. Even this description of Brahma as '*saccidānanda*' is however, imperfect. It only expresses the reality in the best way possible.

Thus starting from the Vedic 'neither being nor non-being', and after successive characterisation of it as food, breath, manas, intellect, and finally as Ānanda, we once more come back in the Upaniṣads, to the original "neither 'being' nor 'non-being'." It is the last height from which all intellectual characterisations return strongly suggesting that beyond this stage, reality is to be experienced only by super-intellectual means and that reasoning is not the final stage of knowledge.

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* *S. B. 3. 2. 17.* 'Brūmah khalu tvam tu na vijānāsi upaśānto 'yam ātma'.

To sum up, if we take a review of the philosophical reflections of the time from the Ṛg Veda to the Upaniṣads, we arrive at the following successive findings regarding consciousness.

(1) At first a recognition, of the Oneness of the principle of the universe. This principle is both transcendental and immanent in it.

(2) A complete transformation of this principle from the region of the outer to the inner in man.

(3) The absolute identification of the outer macrocosm with the inner microcosm.

(4) The recognition of the nature of this principle as absolute consciousness which is all-pervading, immutable and eternally present.

(5) Insistence on the transcendental nature of this consciousness which is entirely unlike any other known object of the empirical world, and providing a solid bedrock to the later transcendental theories of consciousness in the Sāṅkhya-Yoga, and the Advaita Vedānta.

In the Upaniṣads as well as in the above two systems, consciousness is conceived and propounded as an independent and eternal reality without any distinctions whatever, in it, as completely inactive, capable of existing as pure '*jña*', pure light without content, untainted by experience and yet, strangely foundational of all experience. This theory of the foundational nature of Consciousness or Self has been the legacy of the Upaniṣads to the subsequent systems which have sometimes deduced from it quite contradictory doctrines about the nature and function of consciousness. Kaṇāda and Gautama, for instance, have relapsed into the reality of the empirical and the conditional consciousness only, as against the Transcendental and the Absolute consciousness which marked the last stages of the Upaniṣads, and which would be the subject matter of our discussion in the following chapters.

*Is the Upaniṣad's view of the one, universal and Absolute Consciousness agnostic ?*

Because the foundational and the absolute consciousness is declared in the Upaniṣads as uncharacterisable, the view is sometimes held that the exact nature of this Ātman is unknown, and we cannot assert whether ultimately, the Ātman is 'jña' or 'ajña'. The interpreters of the agnostic view reason in some such way. The ultimate reality is either characterisable or uncharacterisable. If it is the former, it must be definitely characterised as either pure Intelligence, or pure Bliss, capable of being felt and enjoyed by an individual in an act of experience. If, on the other hand, it is uncharacterisable, it becomes unknowable, and cannot be characterised as either conscious or unconscious, 'jña' or 'ajña', and as such, falls outside the sphere of intelligible discourse. And since the absolute reality cannot be characterised either as pure Intelligence or as Bliss,—for that would imply the presence in it of the duality of the subject and the object necessary for experience which is emphatically denied by the Upaniṣads—the Ātman must, therefore, be held, to be an unknown entity, a mere nought whose exact nature is never known.

Now, it is true that the Upaniṣads are emphatic in their denial of the duality of the subject and the object* in the Absolute consciousness, but they are equally emphatic in their denial of it either as a nought or as something unknown.† We are, therefore, in the horns of a dilemma. It appears that the Upaniṣads either contradict themselves or preach agnosticism.

The question, therefore, is: Can we reconcile the uncharacterisability of the distinctionless Absolute consciousness with the declaration of its nature as

* *Bṛh.* 2.4.6. ff. 3.7.23. 3.8.11. 4.4.19. 4.3.30.

† *Kena.* 1.4. "It is both known and unknown."
2.2. ff.

'Cit' or Ānanda ? Is the Ātman ultimately conscious or unconscious, or both conscious and unconscious, or neither conscious nor unconscious ?

The answer to the above dilemma is that, the Upaniṣads neither contradict themselves nor preach a doctrine of agnosticism with regard to the Ātman. The interpreters of the agnostic view assume a hidden major premise in their argument which is not necessarily true. The opposite of the empirically characterisable is not nothingness ; and a transcendental existence is not incompatible with empirical incomprehensibility. It is just this reality of the unempirical that the theory of the Unconditioned Ātman is anxious to establish. The empirical and the empirically known is obvious, but it is not self-supporting. It has an unobvious basis and a foundational support which is not non-existent. Only, the ultimate truth cannot be fully exhausted in our empirical casts of necessary duality.

It is, therefore, not the theory of the Basic Consciousness that is agnostic, but it is the critic, who first supposes the reality to be of a definitely measurable nature, (an unwarrantable assumption in itself) and then complains that the reality would not be revealed and measured by his self-imposed rod. We put ourselves in the wrong by expecting the ultimate reality to be necessarily revealable only in one particularised form of our discursive thought. Should one do so, agnosticism is not only inevitable but also self-created. The problem of agnosticism is thus a *pseudo*-problem, and not a real one. It starts with an initial fallacy of '*ex hypothesi*' limiting the limitless, and then complains that the limitless does not behave like the limited.

It is the definitised, and the conditioned that is grasped in an act of knowledge, and whatever is thus grasped is, therefore, not the infinite and the unconditioned. But the infinite and the unconditioned which eludes our conditional grasp esists as

the very basis and the support of the finite. The infinite is real, for otherwise, the finite too would not be. The Upaniṣads therefore, far from teaching agnosticism, open a new vision which is wider than the small opening of the empiricist through which he lets in but a conditioned and definitised knowledge, and is therefore, forced to deny the unconditioned and the Absolute.

Thus, positivism and agnosticism are not the two exhaustive alternatives of an attitude towards reality. Between the two extremes of Positivism and Agnosticism is the Transcendentalism or the doctrine of foundational consciousness which safeguards against the dangers of both. In fact, agnosticism should be deemed to be a direct outcome of empiricism. It is to the credit of the Upaniṣads to have preached and established the reality of the transcendental consciousness which should justifiably not conform to the canons of the '*Vyavahārika*' or the empirical knowability. We have, therefore, to guard ourselves against the following errors, if we are to understand truly the Upaniṣadic theory of Consciousness :—

Firstly, that the empirically experienced reality is the only reality and what is not so experienced does not exist,* and secondly, that the unconditioned and the transcendental (*Pāramārthika*) reality is of the nature of the lower or the '*vyavahārika*' reality, so that we can know it in the manner of an ordinary object by means of definition etc.

This lack of definite characterisation of the ultimate consciousness and entity has puzzled many an interpreter of Indian thought. Even such careful

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* *Svātmanirūpanam* 1.16-19. 'Brahman is not an object of experience being itself experience, and therefore one should not conclude that it does not exist because its existence is always in the form of pure intelligence'.

'Svayameva anubhavatvāt yadyapy etasya nānubhāvyatvam, sakṛdapya abhāva śaṅkā na bhaved bodhasvarūpa saṭṭāyāḥ nāvedyam api parokṣam bhavati brahma svayamprakāśatvāt'.

scholars as Dr. Johnston and Deussen suggest doubt as to the ultimate nature of the transcendental principle as expounded by Yājñavalkya and developed later by the Advaita philosophy. While Dr. Johnston thinks that the nature of the Ātman is a puzzle and is neither 'jña' nor 'ajña',* Deussen thinks that what remains of the self when all notions of the not-self are withdrawn from it, is not consciousness but something unconscious.†

Two questions arise out of this interpretation of Dr. Johnston and Deussen regarding the nature of the ultimate principle. (1) Is there a real puzzle in Y.V's answer 'na pretya' etc., and is there any doubt in the mind of Yājñavalkya with regard to the consciousness or unconsciousness of the Reality? (2) Is it true as Dr. Johnston thinks that the Yoga and the Sānkhya only evaded the problem of Yājñavalkya which no doubt, as he aptly says, is the 'crux of the problem'. Or may be, that if rightly understood, there is no puzzle in the problem of the real nature of the Ātman, and the Sānkhya-Yoga came to a definite standpoint about the nature of the ultimate reality consciously and deliberately. For does not Yājñavalkya in the very next verse hurry to add, that he certainly meant no puzzle?‡ For, if once the distinction between the transcendental and the pragmatic nature of the Reality is truly understood, there is in fact, no puzzle. That loss of consciousness cannot be meant as Deussen seems to think, is more

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**Early Sānkhya*, p. 55., "Both the Yoga and the Sānkhya schools of thought only evaded the problem (which amazed Maitreyi when Yajñavalkya declared, 'na pretya sanjñāsti'. Bṛih. 2.4.12.) by teaching that when the Puruṣa takes cognisance of what Buddhi presents to it, it only reflects it as it were, without real cognisance; strictly speaking, it is not either 'jña' or 'ajña'.

†Deussen, '*System of Vedānta*' p. 315. "Essential to the soul is intelligence, but this intelligence is at *bottom imaginery*, for the Indians separate the whole apparatus of perception from the soul and unite it to the physical part of man".

‡*Bṛh.* 2.4.13. 'na vā are moham bravīma ?'.

than evident from Śankara Bhāṣya of the *Brahma Sūtra 1. 4. 22* and the *Bṛh. 2. 4. 12* when he says that 'no more *particular* consciousness there is', and not that there is total loss of it.* The loss of *particular consciousness* is observed even when the soul is in the body, as when in deep sleep, but no one thinks that therefore, the Ātman is unconscious. The passage only means to say that on the soul departing from the body, all 'specific cognition vanishes, not that the self is destroyed'. Specific cognitions are due to the connection of the ultimate reality with nescience 'avidyā', and when this severence of connection takes place (as also in deep sleep) specific cognition no more takes place. But the vision of the seer is eternal and never lost.

One feels that attempts have not been made to reconcile 'na pretya sanjñāsti'† and 'there is no intermission in the vision of the seer',‡ which are obviously not contradictory statements if the Upaniṣadic theory of the Absolute consciousness is rightly understood. From the denial of specific cognition is not meant, either that there is no cognition and hence the Reality is unconscious (Deussen) or that it is neither conscious nor unconscious (Johnston). The obvious meaning of the statements would seem to be that the ultimate reality is not empirically characterisable and that no concept drawn from the level of common-sense thinking is appropriate to the description of it. We have an analogy of the same in modern science. The language of common sense is inadequate to describe correctly the sub-atomic and the micro-physical phenomenon, or, for the matter of that, any one of the modern physical theories of the ultimate physical reality. Similar must be the difficulty or even the utter impossibility of describing the ultimate foundational consciousness.

*S.B.* 1.4.22. 'viśeṣa vijñāna vināśa abhiprāyam etat vināśābhidhānam nātmocchedābhiprāyam'.

†*Bṛh.* 2.4.42.

‡*Bṛh.* 4.3.23-30. 'na dṛṣṭur dṛṣṭer viparilopo vidyate'.

Nor are we justified in expecting any more definite characterisation of the ultimate and the highest reality in terms of practical thinking than we would be with regard to any ultimate scientific phenomenon. The terms of everyday life fall short of complete characterisation of that which is at the root of it.

Unlike Western thought, the Hindu thinkers assume that experience, which is always empirical, is not the very last concept. The search in Hindu thought has been for that which is behind all experience, and hence, must necessarily elude being itself experienced. The presupposition of experience cannot itself be an object of experience. Experience is a phenomenal reality belonging to the mundane existence. Its essential nature consists in the fluctuations of the pairs of opposites (the *Dvandvas*), and therefore, the true state which is above and beyond the reach of the opposites cannot be grasped by the fluctuations of experience. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* makes it clear in 'How can the *knower* indeed be known.'* It is not the Upaniṣads or the Sānkhya-Yoga (whatever may be their other difficulties or short-comings in solving the eternal crux of the nature of the ultimate reality) that evade the problem of consciousness of the Ātman. On the contrary, it is their definite finding that the '*Pāramārthika*' Reality, even though it is of the nature of consciousness, is above empirical experience and will evade the attempt to be grasped empirically.

Instead of evasion, there is thus a definite answer that the ultimate inner Reality is experienceable in a way different from that ordinarily understood.

The second question that arises out of Dr. Johnston's interpretation is, whether the Puruṣa is strictly speaking 'jña' or 'ajña', to which question he suggests, 'It is neither'. The answer is, as all answers

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**Bṛh.* 4.5.15. 'vijñātāram are kena vijānīyāt'.

regarding the ultimate reality must be, both correct and incorrect. One can as well say, it is both 'jña' and 'ajña'. The answer that it is not 'jña', is correct because it is not conscious in the sense of possessing specific cognition and the answer that it is not 'ajña' is correct too, in the sense that it is not unconscious like an unconscious jar.

The only meaning of the statement that it is neither 'jña' nor 'ajña' is, that it equally falls outside both the categories of thought; for in fact, it falls within no category of a knowable object as such.* If a thing is outside the category of an object as such, it is naturally impossible to make suitable predicates about it. "Whatever can be thought, is not Brahma."† But this peculiarity of the ultimate reality is perfectly compatible with the nature of the Reality as 'cit' or 'jña'. Ultimately, the reality is 'jña' or 'cinmātra', for as repeated so frequently,‡ this is the very meaning of 'eternal witness' or the 'draṣṭā', or dṛśi,-mātra' that it is eternally conscious, 'kūṭastha sākṣin, nitya caitanya svarūpa' which is a compact mass of intelligence 'vijñānaghana.'§

The entire trend of the Upaniṣadic and the Sānkhya-Yoga thought has been unmistakably to assert the pure '*sciousness*' or 'Śuddhabodhasvarūpatva' of the pure light of the ultimate spiritual reality of 'Puruṣa' or the Ātman. Dr. Johnston's statement that it is 'neither 'jña' not 'ajña' is to be understood in the light of the above discussions that it is only empirically neither 'jña' nor 'ajña'. In reality, and in itself, it is pure 'cit', pure consciousness, existing

* *Bṛh. S.B.* 4.4.20. 'anyena hyanyat pramīyate, idam tv ekam eva ato aprameyam nanu viruddham idam ucyate aprameyam jñāyate iti ca, naiṣa doṣaḥ, anyavastuvad anāgamapramāṇa prameyatva pratiṣedhārthatvāt.' Also *S.B.B.G.* 2.18.

† *S.B.* 3.2.22.

‡ *Bṛih.* 4.3.11. 'asuptaḥ'. 4.3.30., 4.3.23. 'na hi vijñātur vijñāter viparilopo vidyate'.

§ *Bṛih.* 4.5.13. 'kṛtsnaḥ prajñānaghana eva'.

in itself and by itself, and as nothing but 'citśakti'. It is self-luminous, 'svayam'-'jyotiḥ' and 'svabodha.'*

Nor is it to be inferred from the foregoing discussion that the nature of the ultimate reality is unknowable, for there is a definite knowledge of it though not in an empirical way. It is 'Aprameya', i.e., not known as an object of mediate knowledge, yet it is known as involved in every act of knowing.†

To conclude therefore, that it is not known because it is not an object either of the external or of the internal senses, is as absurd as to suppose, that light does not exist though the colours are seen, or that, since it is always only some object which is illuminated, and not the light itself, therefore no light exists. On the other hand, it is definitely comprehensible to those whose nature is pure, and whose minds are drawn away from the external things, 'Suvijñeyam'. In reality, the transcendental nature of one's own Ātman is ever existent, but only as covered with a veil. If "one's own true Ātman is unknown, all efforts and actions for the attainment of an object would become meaningless."‡

Our conclusion, therefore, is that though the Absolute consciousness is logically and empirically uncharacterisable, it is yet not unknown, and its nature is 'jña' or pure intelligence as opposed to unintelligence. Its nature is not that of the variable moulds of intelligence of which we have an experience in our daily life of mediated consciousness, but its nature is of the constant, unchanging and basic consciousness, which is the presupposition of all distinctions and manifoldness.

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* *Y. S.* 20. 'Dṛṣṭā dṛśimātra'. Also Y. B. 2.20. 'siddham puruṣasya sadā jñātā-viṣayatvam'. Also Y. S. 4.18. 'Sadā jñātā'.

† *Kena.* 1. 4. 'pratibodha viditam matam amṛtatvam hi vindate', avijñātam vijānatām, vijñātamavijānatām'.

‡ *Gītā S.B.* 18.50. 'na hi ātmānāma kasyacit kadācit aprasiddhaḥ aprasiddhe hi tasmin nātmani asvārthāḥ sarvāḥ pravṛttayaḥ prasajyeran'.

# PART II.

## The Systematic Speculations.

# CHAPTER III

# THE ONTOLOGICAL NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

## *What is Consciousness ?*

The question is to be put, what after all *is* consciousness ? It is difficult to answer questions about the ultimate principle of one's experiences and consciousness is one such ultimate principle. But we have to think of it in some terms and to put it in one or the other of our usual classifications of thought as either a substance 'dravya', an attribute 'guṇa', or an action 'karma', and so forth. Hindu Philosophy provides a discussion of the same in all possible alternatives. Consciousness has been held to be a substance, a quality, and a movement, and as unchanging and eternal; or as changing and momentary; as distinctionless, pure, and isolated ; or again, as eternally differentiated into distinctions of subject and object, and as always possessing a content.

All these different and divergent views can be brought together under the two broad divisions of Realism and Idealism ; the realist maintaining that consciousness is mechanically produced as a result of a conjunction of a number of circumstances and lasts as short or long as the conjunction lasts. Consciousness is not eternally present and is not independent of a collocation of circumstances. The realist may again be divided into two classes. The Material Realist and the Spiritual Realist. The Material Realist represented by 'Cārvāka', affirms consciousness to be a result of a combination of only *material* substances, while the Spiritual Realist represented by N. V. thought, believes in a spiritual substance called

soul or the 'Ātman' as distinct from material substances, and holds that consciousness, though produced by a conjunction of several objects with the 'Ātman' like the '*Manas*, the '*Indriyas*', and the external objects 'the *Viṣayas*', yet inheres in the spiritual substance, the soul only, of which it is a quality. But even the soul does not eternally or always possess consciousness. In the state of deliverance, the soul is devoid of all its qualities including consciousness with which it gets endowed only when joined with the '*Manas*', the '*Indriyas*' and the objects 'the *Viṣayas*'.

The difference, it would appear, between the materialist 'Cārvāka' and the Realist N. V. is only in their recognition or non-recognition of an immaterial substance or the soul. They both agree that consciousness does not exist apart from a suitable collocation of circumstances, and is only an adventitious property of a substance '*Āgantuka dharma*'. The Idealist on the other hand, believes in consciousness as an independent and eternally existing reality in the form of a pure, contentless, and formless, intelligence '*jñaptimātra*'. It is neither produced nor destroyed, but always exists in its own right, unaided by any other object. Some like Rāmānuja believe that consciousness is an inseparable quality, a 'dharma' of the conscious soul, while others like Śankara hold it to be the 'svarūpa' itself of the Ātman, and not its '*guṇa*' or a quality. The Sānkhya-Yoga agrees with the Advaita Vedānta in holding that consciousness is eternal and inseparable from the 'Puruṣa'. These further hold it to be *sui generis*, 'svayambhū', a reality in itself, unlike any other object, sharing no other quality with any other object excepting existence or Reality, and absolutely uncharacterisable in terms of either a quality, an action, or even a substance. It exists as 'cinmātrā' and as the source of all 'citta'. It is a contentless consciousness in which there is no consciousness of either 'I' or 'this', 'Aham' or 'Idam'.

There are thus the following views on consciousness :—

(1) That it does not exist. There is nothing like consciousness. The attitude of the Nihilist.

(2) That it is produced by a conjunction of material substances which alone exists. The attitude of 'Cārvāka'.

(3) The Realist attitude of the N. V. according to which, though consciousness is produced by a conjunction of a number of objects, yet it is a quality of a spiritual substance, and inheres in it by the relation of 'Samavāya'. It is born, produced and is destroyed.

(4) The Idealistic attitude of the Śankara Vedānta and also of the Sānkhya-Yoga, according to which consciousness is an eternal, pure, and unobjectified and distinctionless infinite-reality, or the theory of a transcendental and a foundational consciousness with no distinction of ego and non-ego.*

(5) The Idealistic attitude of Rāmānuja, according to which consciousness is an eternal quality of an eternally conscious substance, and is ever marked with the distinction of ego and non-ego.

*The Nihilist Denial of Consciousness :*

That consciousness exists is the very first assumption of an enquiry about its nature, for what does not exist in some sense cannot be discussed. What is sought to be refuted must exist at least in the world of the opponent's reality. There is no getting away from consciousness in the sense that it affirms itself as involved in the very attempt to deny it. Absolute denial of consciousness is its own absurdity, because the absolute denial denies itself, and ends by establishing what it proposes to deny.†

* Śankara Vedānta and S. Y., inspite of big differences have been grouped here together as Idealistic in the sense that they both affirm the independent and uncaused existense of the Pure consciousness.

† N. B. 2, 1, 11,

Consciousness has been denied by the 'Mādhyamika' Nihilist, but only as a part of a doctrine of a general denial of the reality of everything whatever. A careful study of the same will reveal that an absolute denial of it is more of the nature of despair regarding the rational knowledge of its definite nature rather than a positive knowledge of its non-existence.* The 'śūnyavāda' in its purely negative phase does not appeal to the mind as the last word about the nature of reality. The 'Mādhyamika', who cuts at the very ground of consciousness is himself cut by virtue of the fact that all significant denial must have some basis in something real as its logical basis.†

Denial is significant only when something is left. When everything is denied, the denial itself is included in it, and hence the very thing denied becomes real, and the denial defeats its purpose. Even the Nihilist is forced to admit the reality and the knowledge of something.‡ He has at least to say that the knowledge of 'Abhāva' is real and permanent.§ And it is absurd to affirm the knowledge of negation 'abhāva' and to deny the reality of knowledge. All objects are therefore '*Ātmapūrvaka*'. Consciousness is prior to everything, and is affirmed in the affirmation of that very thing.‖ It is in this sense epistemologically *a priori* and undeniable.¶

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* *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*. 2.175. 'Buddhyā vivecya mānānām svabhāvo nāvadhāryate, tasmād nābhilāpyās te nisvabhāvāśca deśitāḥ'.

† *S.B.* 3.2.22. 'Kiñciddhi paramārthamālambya aparamārthaḥ pratiṣidhyate'.

‡ *S.B. Bṛh.* 4. 3. 7. 'ghaṭādi vijñānasya bhāvabhūtatvam abhyupagatameva'.

§ *S. B. Praśna* 6.2. 'na jñāne asati jñeyam nāma bhavati kasyacit abhāvasyāpi jñeyatvāt jñānābhāve tadanupapatteḥ'.

‖ Sarvo hi Ātmāstitvam pratyeti na nāham asmīti, *S.B.* 1.1.1.

¶ *Devī Bhāgavata* 7. 32. 15. 16. 'Samvido vyabhicāraḥ tu nānubhūtosti Kahircit. Yadi tasyāpy anubhavaḥ tarhi ayam yena sākṣinā 1. Anubhūtaḥ sa eva atra śiṣtaḥ sa eva atra śiṣtaḥ samvid vapuḥ purā.

'No one has ever experienced the absence or the destruction of consciousness, for if some one has experienced it, then he has the consciousness of it.'*

But, why has consciousness been denied? One chief reason for the denial of consciousness has been the tendency to get consciousness presented to itself as a presentation. This obviously is an impossibility and hence the consequent denial of what cannot be had as a presentation. But the reality of consciousness is quite compatible with its unknowability as an object. That which reveals every other object, and illumines the entire world of things, cannot itself be apprehended as a 'this', or 'that'.† Consciousness, to which everything is presented cannot be shown to itself as one shows a cow holding her by the horn. To say that other objects are known, but consciousness or self is not known is as absurd as to say that colours are seen but nothing like an eye exists, for the eye is not seen. It is not reasonable to attribute the nature of the known to the knower.‡

The conclusion of the above observation is that because consciousness, by the very nature of the case 'vastusvabhāvyāt', cannot be presented to itself like other objects, it should not therefore be dismissed. No one, as put by Vācaspati Miśra, ever doubts the fact of his existence.§ "Even if we declare the whole world to be void, this void presupposes a cogniser of itself.'|| 'Śūnyasyāpi svasākṣitvāt'." This 'Ātman' is

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* *Devī Bhāgavata* 7.32.15.16. 'Samvido vyabhicāraḥ tu nānubhūtosti Kahircit. Yadi tasyāpy anubhavaḥ tarhi ayam yena sākṣinā 2. Anubhūtaḥ sa eva atra śiṣtaḥ samvida vapuḥ purā.

† *Bṛih.* 3.4.1-*S.B.* 'tasmāt tam pratyagātmānam dṛṣṭeḥ-dṛṣṭāram na paśyeḥ. Vastusvabhāvyāt. 'tadaśakyatvāt-na kriyate'.

‡ 'Dehādi Sanghaṭasyāpi śabdādi svarūpatvāviśeṣāt vijñeyatvāviśeṣāt ca na yuktam vijñātṛtvam'.

§ *Bhāmatī.* 1.1.4. 'Na Kaścit samdigdhe aham vā nāham veti'.

|| Radhakrishnan. *I. P. Vol.* II. p. 478.

known to exist on account of its immediate presentation. 'Aparokṣatvāc pratyagātmā prasiddhaḥ.'*

*The Material Realist :*

Even when consciousness is accepted as an undeniable fact, it is still open to deny its uniqueness and foundational nature or epistemological priority. The cruder form of materialism, therefore, in India declares consciousness to be an epi-phenomenon or just a by-product of Nature, produced like the intoxicating property of a drug when the material elements are transferred into the physical body. Started by *Bṛhaspati*, the view is popularly associated with the name of Cārvāka. Consciousness is supposed to arise in the same way as the red colour is produced by the combination of betel leaf, nut, and lime, or is the result of the mixing up of the white with yellow, or again as the power of intoxication is generated in molasses.†

*Idealistic Criticism of Materialism :*

Śankara criticises the above view by asking "What is the nature of that consciousness which is supposed by the materialists to have its origin in the material elements? Consciousness must either be a perception of the material elements and of what is produced from them, or it must be a quality of the material elements. In either case we are faced with difficulties."‡ For in the first case, the material elements and their products are objects of consciousness which cannot be obviously their product; and in the latter case, it would be absurd to say that physical qualities can objectify their own form and colour as is the case in perception. A consciousness

* *S.B.* 1.1.1.

† *Vide Bārhaspatyāni sūtrāṇi.* "Prithvyāptejo vāyur iti tattvāni, tatsamudāye śarīrendriyaviśaya samjñā, tebhyaḥ caitanyam, kiṇvādibhyo madaśaktivad vijñānam'.

‡ *S.B.* 3.3.54. (See Foot Note on next page).

that is a product of material elements could not make the material things and their product its own object. To suppose that would be as absurd as to suppose that an acrobat can mount his own shoulders.

The conclusion, therefore, is that consciousness or the self has to be something different '*vyatireka*' from the material elements and it being essentially knowledge in its nature 'upalabdhisvarūpa', cannot be the same as the physical body.* This criticism of the materialist is based upon two Idealistic principles. Firstly, that whatever is presented to consciousness cannot be identified with it, and as matter has a meaning only in so far as it is presented to consciousness, it must be entirely different from matter ; and secondly, that, what is an object of consciousness cannot be a precedent factor in the genesis of consciousness. As it would be absurd on the part of a physiologist to explain the vital processes of the body with reference to the movement of the muscles etc., for it is the vital process itself that renders the movement possible and not *vice-versa*, similarly it is absurd on the part of a materialist to explain the conscious process with reference to the movement of the material elements. Consciousness, therefore, has none of the characteristics that belong to any or all of the collection of knowable objects. It is peculiarly itself and '*sui-generis*'. It is still open to the materialist to answer back the Idealist and maintain that he does not see any reason why consciousness may not be psychologically *a posterior*, and yet epistemologically *a priori*. But the argument assumes "a *quid* anterior to consciousness which cannot be appealed to in the explanation of things,"† for it already assumes the

* *S.B.* 2.3.40. Also

*S.B.* 3.3.54. "na hi bhūta bhautika dharmeṇa satā caitanyena bhūtavhautikāni viṣayī kriyeran".

*S.B.* 2.3.7. and *B.G.S.B.* 2.18.

† The Nature of Self. *A. C. Muckerjee* p. 135.

logical priority of consciousness. All objects of knowledge have temporal determinations, such as past, present or future, but that for which these temporal determinations have meaning cannot itself be in time. It is an eternal presence. 'Sarvadā Vartamānas-vabhāvaḥ.'*

*N. V. Criticism of Materialism :*

N. B. 3. 2. 35-40 criticises the materialist and says that consciousness cannot be a quality of material elements or a combination of them for the following reasons :

(1) Activity and the absence of activity are the sole indications of the desire and aversion which cannot be affirmed of material objects.

(2) The view of the materialist would lead to the presence of several cognisers in each single body.

(3) The body and the sense organs are as much under the control of something else as the jar, etc. The mind also is under the control of something else because it is only an instrument like an axe. So that all the three are under the control of someone else who is the real cogniser.†

*The Sānkhya Kārikā* also gives similar reasons for the existence of Puruṣa separate from the Material Principle.‡

*The Spiritual Realist :*

The theory of the N. V. or the Spiritual realist is philosophically hardly any better than that of the materialist. By a process of elimination, consciousness, according to it, is not essentially a product of matter and is not a quality of a material object.

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* *S.B.* 2.3.7 and *B.G.S.B.* 2.18.

† *N.B.* 3.2.37-40.

‡ *S.K.* 17. *S.P.S.* 5.129. 3.20-22. 6.1-2.

Jayanta in his *Nyāya Mañjarī* arrives at the conclusion that consciousness belongs to the self by a new form of 'Anumāna' named 'Pariśeṣānumāna' which consists in asserting anything of something, because it is found not to belong to any other thing. It is a sort of an inference by residuum.* Consciousness, according to the N. V. reasoning, belongs to the soul, because it could not belong either individually or collectively to any one of the material elements of the body, the senses or the *manas*.†

*Śrīdhara* arrives at the conclusion of consciousness inhering in soul by a similar argument. He asks the question: if the self is essentially unconscious, why should consciousness inhere in the soul and not in any other of the collocation of '*manas*', '*indriya*' and '*viṣaya*'? His answer is 'It is due to the 'svabhāva-niyama'. Though consciousness is produced by all the four, it inheres in the self only, even as a cloth produced by the thread and the shuttle, inheres in the thread and not in the shuttle, likewise, the self is not of the nature of consciousness, but still consciousness inheres in it.‡

Knowledge, therefore, is a quality of the Soul, supported by and generated in it by a combination of '*manas*', '*indriya*', and '*viṣaya*.'§

This theory is based upon an assumption of an extreme dualism of substance and attributes. The position, therefore, is but slightly different from that of the materialist, because consciousness is even here

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* *N.M.* p. 133 also *N.K.* 73. 'tat pariśeṣadātmaiva tadāśraya iti'.

† *N.M.* p. 441.

‡ *N.K.* p. 97. 'Svabhāva niyamād eva niyamopapatteḥ, yathā tantunām apaṭattvepi tantutvajāti niyamāt teṣu paṭasamavāyo na turyādiṣu tadvat acidātmakepy ātmani ātmatva-jāti niyamāt jñānasamavāyasya niyamo bhaviṣyati'.

§ *N.B.* 3.2.18-41 also *V.S.* 1.1.6.—where consciousness is counted as a quality. *N.K.* p. 57. 'aśarīrinām ātmanām na viṣayāvabodhaḥ'.

conceived to be a product, and dependent upon a suitable collocation of circumstances.* Besides, the soul may exist without consciousness, till and after the production of it.†

According to Kaṇāda, consciousness is produced in the same way as the quality of redness is produced in a jar through its connection with fire. 'Agnighaṭa samyogaja rohitādi guṇavat.'‡

Thus neither the materialist nor the spiritual Realist takes his stand on the essentially independent and eternal nature of thought or knowledge, but makes it only an adventitious product and a dependent quality.

To conclude, we note the following outstanding features of the N. V. position on consciousness :—

(1) That consciousness has a dependent existence, and is not essentially or fundamentally related to the Ātman. It is a mechanical product of an assemblage of events and is evanescent, 'anitya.'

(2) That the Ātman, in the N. V. account of consciousness, is ultimately rendered unconscious or 'jaḍa.'

(3) That consciousness has no unique status amongst objects excepting that it manifests and reveals other objects, but it is not itself self-revealed or self-established, it is neither 'svataḥprakāśa' nor 'svataḥ-siddha.'

*The View of Caraka :*

The view of Caraka as given in his Caraka Samhitā, and as interpreted by Cakrapāṇi is somewhat new.

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* *N.S.* 1.1.4. 'Indriyārtha sannikarśotpannam jñānam'.

† *N.B.* 3.2.18-40. N.M. part 2. p. 432. 'sacetanaḥ citā yogāt tadyogena vinā jaḍaḥ'.

‡ *S.B.* 2.3.18. 'Āgantukam ātmanaḥ caitanyam, ātma-manaḥ saṅyogajam'.

Though the view of consciousness as expressed in Sūtra and Śārīrasthāna is not so fully developed as one would wish, yet we have attempts here at quite original suggestions. According to Caraka, the self is in itself inactive, and is neither pure intelligence nor pure bliss. It is conscious and a knower by reason of its constant association with '*manas*' which is also the cause of activity in the self. But the soul is regarded as having a kind of formless consciousness always present. It is difficult to place the opinion of Caraka in any one of the other orthodox systems. That the soul is conscious by virtue of its association with '*manas*' is a view very near to N. V. but in N. V., the soul is not always in contact with '*manas*' and not always conscious, while according to Caraka, consciousness is beginningless 'Anādi.' This has undoubtedly a Vedānta and Sānkhya tinge though the details are lacking. The view of Caraka is thus midway between the Realistic N. V. and the Idealistic Vedānta and Sānkhya.

There is no doubt that it recognised the independent and uncreated nature of consciousness as against the N. V., but could not affirm it without the contact of '*manas*', which contact must be held to be constant. 'The notion cannot be entertained that consciousness which is a beginningless substance or the conscious substance is created by another. If such another, however, be the Ātman, or the consciousness itself, then we are willing to agree.'*

It is difficult to reconcile this with other statements; for instance, that the '*Soul is unconscious*', and "the faculties and the senses are the causes of consciousness."† On the one hand, it is said, that it

* *Vide C.S.* 1.11.13. 'anādeḥ cetanādhāto neṣyate paranimitaḥ. para-ātmā sa cet hetuḥ iṣṭostu paranimitaḥ'.

† *C.S. Sūtra 1.55.* 'nirvikāraḥ parastvātmā sattvabhūtaguṇendriyaiḥ caitanye kāraṇam' etc.

cannot be that there was not at any time a current of intelligence, and the Soul is eternal, and on the other hand, it is said that in the last stage, all consciousness with its roots is completely exterminated. "The self is a knower in consequence of his union with the organs ; when the organs are not united, knowledge does not arise."*

It appears that according to Caraka, experience and activity, and whatever is in the nature of phenomenon, is due to a principle of 'Contact.' Contact means more in Caraka than in other systems of thought. The self is regarded to be actionless in its pure state, but "from contact springs everything, in the absence of contact nothing can be."† If nothing can be without 'contact', then consciousness also must be due to 'contact', but if consciousness is 'Anādi', and beginningless, the 'contact' also must be supposed to be ever present. We are told that the contact is beginningless,‡ and it ceases when the Soul attains the highest purity of the Sattva.

Thus the philosophy of Caraka is struggling between the eternity of consciousness and the dogma of 'contact' and is not yet separated into the absolute division of one or the other. An emphasis on the former would end in the independence of the Vedānta or the isolation of the Sānkhya-Yoga, while a similar emphasis on the theory of 'contact' would reduce consciousness to the level of a product on the mercy of a collocation of factors. It would lose its eternality and independence as did actually happen with regard to the N.V.

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* *C.S. Śarīra 1.52.* 'Ātmā jña karaṇai yogāt jñānam tv asya pravartate, karaṇānām avaimalyād ayogādvā na vartate'.

† *Śarīra* 1.55. 'naikaḥ pravartate kartum bhūtātmā nāśnute phalam, saṃyogādvartate sarvam tamrite nāsti kiñcana'.

‡ *Śarīra* 1.79-80. 'nityānubandhanam', ādirnāsti ātmanaḥ kṣetra pāramparyam anādikam, ataḥ tayor anāditvāt kimpūrvamiti nocyate'.

*Idealistic criticism of the Realist*

The idealistic criticism of the Nyāya theory of consciousness is chiefly based upon an attack on the Nyāya theory of the relation between Ātman and 'jñāna' or the Nyāya theory of the relation of inherence, 'Samavāya'. According to Nyāya, the Atmā is' 'ciddharmah na tu cit svabhāvah'', and the "nitya Ātmā" is only a "dharmin" of the "Anitya dharma" of 'jñāna'. This relationship of the substance and the attribute between the two is not admitted by the Idealist. Idealism does not admit an absolute and rigid separation between substance and attribute, 'guṇa' and 'guṇī', or 'dharma' and 'dharmin' as the Nyāya supposes. In the relation of 'samavāya', according to Śankara, one has either to suppose that a relation is related by another relation, and then, that relation will again require a new relation leading to an 'anavasthā prasaṅga', or one has to admit that the relation is not joined by any relation to the terms it binds, which will result in the dissolution of the bond which connects the two terms.* And thus, it is argued that the theory of a 'samavāya' relation between a *permanent* self and a *temporary* consciousness is not satisfactory. N. V. realises the need of a permanent principle involved in our knowledge; it must also recognise that this principle of knowledge or the Ātman should be not only *permanently present*, but also *permanently conscious*, i.e., its consciousness must form an inseparable nature of it.

Having rejected the relation of 'samavāya', the Śankara Vedānta substitutes in its place the relation of 'Tādātmya' or Identity between 'Ātman' and 'cit'. It argues: The relation between intelligence and Self must be either of difference or of identity, or of both identity and difference. If the two are absolutely different, there cannot be the relation of substance and attribute between them. They cannot

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* *S.B.* 2.2.13., also *S.B.* on *G.K.* 2.5.

be related by the external relation of 'samyoga' also, for they are not corporeal objects, nor can the internal relation of 'samavāya' hold between them for fear of infinite regress. Thus the two cannot be different. To say that they are both different and identical would be to make contradictory statements ; and if the two are identical, there is no meaning in saying that one is the attribute of the other. Hence intelligence and Self are identical "Ātma-caitanyayor abhedaḥ".

*Vidyāraṇya* says that consciousness and self must be one and the same and not different as held by the Nyāya and the Prābhākara school of thinkers. A quality does not originate apart from the origination of the substance even as 'the brilliancy of the flame. originates together with the flame'.* There cannot be maintained any real distinction between self and knowledge, for otherwise, such expressions as 'This is known by me', will have to be taken in a secondary and metaphorical sense. If fire and the quality of light were not the same and identical, the expression 'this is lit by fire', would not be true in a literal sense, but would have to be qualified as meaning 'This thing is lit up by wood'† The same is true of knowledge and the self. No one says that an object is known by the quality of the knowledge of the self. Nor can it be said that knowledge cannot be one with the self, since cognitions constantly differ but the self is constant. For, "the different states of cognition do not differ *qua* cognition". The form of cognition is always the same, only the content varies,‡ and "the entire process

* *V.P.S.* p. 58. 'guṇatvapakṣe pradīpagata bhāsvara rūpavad āśraya-janya vyatirekena janmāsambhavāt'.

† *V.P.S.* 'Ātma-caitanyayorbhede vyavahāro ayam kāṣṭhena prakāśitam iti vad upacaritaḥ syāt'. p. 58.

*V.P.S.* p. 57. 'pradīpena prakāśitam iti vanmayā avagatamīti vyavahāra darśanāt'.

‡ *V.P.S.* p. 58. "Ekasyāḥ samvidaḥ viṣaya viśeṣaiḥ sambandhānām utpatti vināśābhyām eva tat siddhau, samvidaḥ apy utpattivināṣayor gauravāt'.

of origination and passing away of cognitions should be accounted for by the connection of the one and same consciousness with different objects."* Whenever we talk of the origination and passing away of the cognition, we forget that we mean only the content of cognition and not cognition itself, for 'consciousness itself can have no antecedent non-existence', in as much as all effects that are found to have antecedent non-existence are objects of consciousness.†

Consciousness and self are, therefore, one. A distinction between the two is, however, allowed for practical convenience, in so far as the term consciousness is used to denote the self in relation to objects, while we speak of self simply, when not wishing to emphasise that relation,‡ just as we speak of 'wood,' when we mean to emphasise the standing close together of the trees and 'trees', when not wishing to bring out that relation. "Consciousness must be regarded either as inseparable from the self or absolutely non-existent."§ To say that consciousness is a non-eternal quality of an eternal substance does not stand to logic and criticism. It is strange indeed that the Ātman which is the support of the consciousness should be dependent upon its own 'guṇa' for the manifestation of its own existence.

To conclude : the main issue of the discussion is, that experience involves two factors :—changing states of knowledge, and an unchanging *knowledge-principle*

* *V.P.S.* page 58. 'Ekasyāḥ samvidaḥ viṣaya viśeṣaiḥ sambandhānāmutpattivināśabhyāmeva tat siddhau".

† '*Sureśvarācārya*', Quoted by Vidyāranya. 'Kāryam sarvairyato dṛṣṭam prāgabhāva puraḥ-saram, tasyāpi samvit sākṣitvāt prāgabhāvo na samvidaḥ'. p. 58.

‡ 'Ātmaiva viṣayopādhiko' nubhava iti vyapadiśyate, avivakṣito'—pādhis'-cā'tma'ti'.

§ '*Naiṣkarmya siddhiḥ* 2.56. 'Ātmanā cāvinābhāvam, athavā vilayam vrajet, na tu pakṣāntaram yāyād ataḥ ca aham dhiyocyate".

called the self. And in order that knowledge may be fully explained, it is necessary to arrive at a more fundamental relationship between the self and consciousness than is accorded to it by the N. V. Realism. In the theory of an unconscious soul, starting on its journey of knowledge with a '*tabula rasa*', and depending upon the mercy of particular and transitory bits of knowledge for all its intellectual equipment, we do not have a satisfactory explanation either of the knowledge of the universals, or of relations, or of the personal identity of the Self. The unconscious *permanence* of the self is all that the Nyāya is anxious to maintain, but we cannot explain knowledge with an unconscious Ātman and a momentary and intermittent series of knowledge-events generated into the Ātman from without.

We cannot, unfortunately, go into the details of the conditions and the possibility of knowledge here. It is enough to point out that for a satisfactory theory of knowledge, *permanence of consciousness* is as necessary as the *permanence of the Ātman,* and the Nyāya makes the mistake of explaining it with only one of its essentials.

The Advaita insists that the Ātman should not only be eternal but also possess the eternality of consciousness without which it is bound to be reduced to a mere unconscious principle in Nature. No distinction can ultimately be made between consciousness and self, which should be held to play a dual role of changing and unchanging consciousness. In other words, consciousness cannot be made a separable quality of the self.

*Idealistic view of Consciousness*

In contrast with the realistic view of consciousness as a mechanical product and a dependent quality, we have the Idealistic or the Transcendental view of the Vedānta and the Sānkhya-Yoga according to

which, consciousness is neither a product of a contact, nor a 'quality' of the self. It is the very essence of the self, not its 'dharma' but its 'svarūpa'. It exists independently by its own right. The Soul is not an *agent* of the *activity* of knowledge, but is just knowledge itself. Just as when it is asserted that "that which shines is the sun", what is really meant is that *brightness* is the very *nature* of the sun; similarly, when it is said that 'the Self is an agent of cognition', what is really meant is that cognition is its very essence, and not its activity.*

Similarly, Puruṣa is just consciousness, a self-existing entity. It is not caused or produced, but is real by its own right. It is neither an illusory principle nor an abstraction. It is concrete but transcendental.† It exists eternally as an unchanging principle of all light and intelligence, without any change, activity or modifications in it.‡

The transcendental consciousness of the Idealist is to be distinguished from its own modifications of which Buddhi is the principle. This Buddhi or the modified consciousness is the principle which is the source of the usual distinctions of the knower, the known, and the knowledge. The splitting up of the consciousness into the distinction of the knower, the known and the knowledge, which is mistaken by the empiricist for its ultimate 'svabhāva', is true only of the modified consciousness '*citta vṛtti*' and is due

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* *Ch. Up.* 8.12.5. S.B. 'Ātmanaḥ sattā mātra eva jñāna kartṛtvam, na tu vyāpṛtatayā, yathā savituḥ sattā mātra eva prakāśana kartṛtva.'

Also *Bṛih.* 4.3.10. *S.B.* 'na paramārthataḥ svataḥ kartṛtvam caitanya-jyotiṣaḥ avabhāsakatva-vyatirekena..tatra kartṛtvam upacaryate ātmanaḥ'.

† *S.B.* 2.3.19. vide. *Tattva Kaumudī* on *S.K.* 5. *Vaiśāradī* 4.22, 1.4, 2.6,18, 20. *Y.B.* 1.6,7.

‡ *Citsukhī* 1.7. 'citrūpatvāt akarmatvāt svayamjyotir iti śruteḥ. Ātmanaḥ svaprakāśatvam ko nivārayitūm kṣamaḥ'.

to a reflection of the ultimate consciousness in the 'Sattva' of the 'Buddhi'. This distinction is not a feature of the consciousness itself, or of the 'cinmātra'. These distinctions belong only to 'Buddhi' and that is why it is called 'guhā'.* Knowledge is supposed to be possessed by the knower only because the knower has no separate or distinct existence apart from the knowledge.†

This consciousness or knowledge which is the *essence* of the Self, is not in the nature of a *separable quality* or an *act*. We describe it as the knowledge *of* the subject only in conformity with the necessity of the language as in the case of the shining of the sun. Such a representation of consciousness, though necessary and unavoidable, is not true. It is nothing more than a false representation arising out of the limitations of discursive thought, and hence is only of the nature of a figurative image, which only *points* to a transcendental consciousness within which itself there is no distinction. This procedure is inevitable on account of the utter incapacity of discursive thought and language to represent truly the ultimate consciousness; for whatever is known must be known by the intellect which grasps it only in distinctions. We have, therefore, the following important tenets of the Idealistic view of consciousness :

(1) That consciousness is the ultimate presupposition of all knowledge and of all distinctions of the knowing agent, 'grāhaka', the quality of knowledge, 'grahaṇa', and the object known, 'grāhya', and is itself distinctionless and one.

(2) Consciousness is not an attribute 'dharma' of the 'Ātman', it is also not something possessed *by* the Ātman. It *is* the 'Ātman'.

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* *Tait. B.B.* 'Nigūḍhā asyām jñāna, jñeya, jñātṛ padārthā iti guhā-buddhiḥ. *S.B.*

† *Taitt. B.B.* 'Ātmanaḥ svarūpam jñāptir, na tato vyatiricyate'. *S.B.*

(3) The ultimate conscious entity does not come under any category of substance, attribute or action. It is the basis of all.

(4) The fact of consciousness is entirely different from anything else. It is unique.

(5) It is not the product of any 'saṅghaṭṭa' or collocation of conditions or 'sāmagrī'.

(6) Not being a product of anything, and not being further reducible into any constituents, it is eternal, unproduced, infinite and unlimited. There is no complexity in it. Its essence is self-revelation.

(7) There is an intrinsic difference between consciousness and its object ; while the former is universal and constant, the latter is particular and alternating.

*Mīmānsā view*

The Mīmānsā view of consciousness is not much developed to enable one to take a critical note of it. Metaphysics has not been the chief occupation of the Mīmānsā but it has nevertheless sounded a very important note about the self-revealing nature of consciousness and has, therefore, come to acquire an important place in the study on the nature of consciousness. Consciousness according to Mīmānsā is the direct and the immediate revelation of the self-revealing thought. It illumines itself, the knower and the known.

According to Prabhākara Mīmānsā, every cognition is a 'tripūṭī samvit', it involves (1) 'Viṣaya-samvit', (2) 'Aham-samvit', (3) 'sva-samvit'.

Consciousness is like the light of the lamp which in one flash illumines not only an external object 'viṣaya', but also itself 'sva' and its substrate, the 'Ātman' or 'Aham' exactly as the lamp illumines an object, itself, and its substrate the wick.*

* *V.P.S.* 56.

To the question, what consciousness in itself is, the Mīmānsā reply is, that it is a 'karma', or an action of the Soul. It is an action 'jñāna karma' of the soul which produces jñātatā, or 'cognisedness' in the objects because of which they are known. Consciousness is not recognised as synonymous with the self as done by the Vedāntist. A distinction is always maintained between consciousness and the self, and the relation between the two is of an *agent* and an *act*. To the N. V., consciousness is the result of a mechanical operation for it would not admit any movement on the part of the Ātman, which in reality is quality-less. Consciousness, thus, in N. V. is not fundamentally related to the Self. But Mīmānsā, by its doctrine of consciousness as 'karma' of the Soul, relates consciousness more fundamentally to the Self than the Nyāya, though ultimately in this theory also, as with the Nyāya, the Self becomes both conscious and unconscious, even as a firefly is both luminous and non-luminous.

Mīmānsā insists on the distinction between consciousness and Self for the simple reason that firstly, there is no consciousness in deep sleep, though the self must be held to exist, and secondly, that in the ultimate stage of salvation, the self must be held to be devoid of both knowledge and bliss.

Both these reasons are controverted by the Idealist who maintains that it is impossible to discover any relation between knowledge and self without making the self unconscious, and leaving it to become conscious on the mercy of mechanical union of circumstances.

But the importance of Mīmānsā lies in the great emphasis which it has given to the self-revealing nature of consciousness as something unique and unlike any other object. It is this unequivocal declaration of Prabhākara on the self-luminous nature of consciousness which has sharply distinguished it from

Nyāya and has added weight to the non-dual Idealistic theory of consciousness. The Nyāya places consciousness which knows and reveals other objects on the same footing with the objects it reveals in the matter of its own revelation. In Nyāya, the world is not divided between the two categories of objects and cognitions, so that while the former is known by the latter, the latter is revealed by itself. Consciousness, is as dependent in the matter of its own revelation as any other object.

Mīmānsā discovers that consciousness might stand on its own in the matter of self-revelation, and may not depend upon other cognitions for its own apprehension. It, therefore, sets forth the doctrine of the '*Tripuṭī saṃvit*' or the immediate and the simultaneous revelation of all the three, the cogniser, the cognised, and the cognition in a single flash of cognition. This emphasis on '*svataḥ-prakāśatva*' has been a great contribution of the Prabhākara school of thought, though it still agrees with the Nyāya in insisting on a difference between the self and knowledge.*

*Rāmānuja's view of consciousness*

According to Rāmānuja, the Ātman is eternal, and its natural quality of consciousness too is eternal. It is 'cidrūpa', and also 'caitanya Guṇaka'.† The Ātman is made up of consciousness which is both the 'svarūpa' as well as the 'guṇa' of it. The self is filled with consciousness and has also for its quality consciousness.‡ "The self is not mere knowledge but the subject of it."§ Knowledge is as distinct from

* This view of 'svataḥprakāśatva' of consciousness which is maintained by Prabhākara is not shared by Kumārila without some difference as will be seen in the next Chapter.

† *Śrī Bhāṣya* 1.1.1. p. 30. 'Evamātmā cidrūpa eva caitanya-guṇakaḥ'.

‡ *R.B.* 2.3.29.

§ *R.B.* 1.1.1. 'Ātmā jñātā eva na prakāśa mātram. p. 21.

the knowing subject whose quality it is, as smell which is perceived as a quality of earth is distinct from earth.* The nature of self is, therefore, not so much pure consciousness as knowledge which, now and then relates itself to objects. This consciousness is always of distinctions 'na ca nirviṣayā kācit samvit asti',† and is always in the form of 'this is this' and ceaselessly changing.

In Rāmānuja, thus, "the relation between the self and the consciousness is not clearly conceived",‡ for how can consciousness be both the eternal essence 'svarūpa', and the non-eternal quality of the Self? Rāmānuja wants to strike a middle course between the N. V. Realist and the Śankara Idealist, which does not work well. If consciousness is made a non-eternal quality of the self, in the manner of the N. V., then the obvious result is that the self is made unconscious whenever it is devoid of that quality. This view is not agreeable to Rāmānuja, for the self to him should never be deemed to be without consciousness. The Ātman is not 'acit'. Consciousness should, therefore, be made coexistent with the self, and as eternal as the self, if the 'cit' nature of the self is to be saved. This, however, necessitates making consciousness the essence 'svarūpa' of the self, and not its 'dharma' in which case, there remains no difference between self and consciousness and both are made synonymous, leading to the position of Śankara.

Rāmānuja is anxious to avoid both the alternatives, and therefore maintains that self has consciousness both as its essence as well as its quality. Consciousness must be a quality because it must have a substrate, and self must be eternally conscious because it cannot

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* *R.B.* 2.3.27. 'yathā pṛthavyā gandhasya guṇatvenopalabhyamānasya tato vyatirekaḥ tathā jānāmīti jñātur guṇatvena pratiyamānasya jñānasya ātmanaḥ vyatirekaḥ siddhaḥ'.

|| *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 26.

¶ *Indian Philosophy.* Vol. II. p. 718.

be unconscious. But a quality is not eternal and what belongs to a substance eternally is not its quality but is its very essence as heat is of fire. It is, thus, seen that Rāmānuja does not carry out the metaphysical implications of his desired theory of the 'jña svarūpa' of the 'jīva'.

He says* that terms like 'samvit', 'anubhūti' and 'jñāna' etc., are 'sambandhi śabda', 'samvidanubhūti jñānādi śabda sambhandi śabda', but he stops short of inquiring into the consequence of a philosophy of relation. If self is to be eternally conscious then the hypothesis of consciousness as a 'dharma', 'guṇa' or quality is redundant, because it is already provided for in the hypothesis of 'essence' or 'svarūpa'. The alternative to the doctrine of consciousness as the essence of self is the unconsciousness of the self, and when once it is accepted that consciousness is the essence or 'svabhāva' of the self as opposed to and different from 'dharma' or 'guna', the logical identity of the self and consciousness too must necessarily follow.

Rāmānuja's effort, therefore, to hold on to the concept of consciousness as a quality 'dharma' and to run with the idea of the eternality of the 'cit svarūpa' of the self is far from being successful.

*Differences between Śankara, Prabhākara and Rāmānuja*

Firstly, to Śankara only an undifferentiated consciousness is real.† The differentiated is adventitious and illusory.‡ The distinction even of the knower and the known and the principle of egoity 'Ahaṅkāra' which appears to the empirical knowledge so basic and ultimate, is also illusory, and is due only to the limiting adjuncts of the 'Antah-karaṇa' and the rest.§

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* *R.B.* p. 31.

† *S.B.* 2.3.40.

‡ *S.B.* 1.1.4. *Ṣ.Ḅ.Ḡ.Ḵ.* 4.67.

§ *S.B.* 1.3.2.

When this Ahankāra dissolves itself in deep sleep or in the state of liberation, the undifferentiated consciousness shines forth in its eternally unmodified light. Thus it is only the distinctionless Ātman which is truly real. The Ahaṅkāra is superimposed on it and is not an ultimate reality, and does not exist even in deep sleep. Secondly, since Śankara does not differentiate between consciousness and the eternal self, it must naturally follow that consciousness exists in the condition of deep sleep and swoon also. Now to Prabhākara and Rāmānuja, egoity is a permanent feature of the self,* and self and egoity are identical. Both Prabhākara and Rāmānuja deny either that egoity is ever dissolved or that consciousness is 'Nitya' in the sense of existing in deep sleep. Thus, while to Śankara, self and consciousness are identical, and self and ego two different concepts, to Prabhākara and Rāmānuja, it is just the reverse. While self and consciousness are not identical (for self is a subject of consciousness and not mere consciousness), self and ego are identical, for there can be no consciousness without the feeling of 'I'.† The ego is not an illusory superimposition on the self, but constitutes its very essence in the same way in which the distinctionless and the egoless consciousness constitutes the essence of it to the Śankarite. All the three, however, agree on this one important point that consciousness is not an adventitious property of the self, as held by the N. V. but is more fundamentally related to it.

*A review and a critical estimate*

Śankara and Sāṅkhya-Yoga regard consciousness as an eternal light existing in its own right, and constituting as the very essence 'svarūpa' of the Ātman

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* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 20. (a) 'svāpa mada mūrchāsu ca saviśeṣa evānubhavaḥ', also 'jñātaiva ahamarthaḥ also' 'jñātaiva na prakāśamātram'.

(b) *V.P.S.* p. 56. 'Ahaṅkāra Ātmaiva' (Prabhākara).

† *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 36. 'Svarūpam eva aham arthaḥ Ātmanaḥ'.

or the Puruṣa. It is neither a quality, nor an action of anything else, but is independent.

Rāmānuja steers a middle course and holds consciousness to be both an essence and a property of the Ātman.

The N. V. and Prabhākara hold that consciousness is a quality of the Ātman, while Kumārila holds that it is an action 'karma' of the Self, because it is the 'phala' or result of its cognitive activity, 'jñāna karma'. It has thus a dependent existence and is 'anitya'.

Caraka holds it to be a beginningless entity, and as always present 'Anādi', but yet produced and generated on account of the "contact" of the 'Ātmā' with the 'manas'.

The Nyāya position that consciousness is a mechanical quality produced by the contact of various factors inhering in a substance separate from itself is metaphysically the least satisfactory. It does not take its stand either upon the independent or upon the self-revealing nature of thought. The common sense opinion that substances are entirely different from their attributes and actions cannot be philosophically maintained. It not only makes the Ātman, 'jaḍa', but also makes it difficult to explain experience.

The Sānkhya recognises the independent principle of consciousness in its theory of 'Puruṣa, but unfortunately, separates entirely the form of knowledge with the matter of it. The transcendental principle of 'Puruṣa' remains so separated and 'Kevala' from the knowledge substance that it remains a mystry how the pure element of knowledge takes a form entirely foreign to its nature. This has remained a most difficult problem in Sānkhya epistemology and metaphysics. While we cannot derive consciousness from material 'saṅghaṭṭa' alone as is done by the N. V., we should not forget that consciousness in its empirical form is always mediated through its material

'sāmāgrī'. To overlook this essential relation of the two principles of knowledge, the formal and the material, has been the mistake of Sānkhya.

Prabhākara takes the bold step of declaring the unique self-revealing position of consciousness which in one flash of illumination, reveals both the knower and the known, and thus, scores a point not only against the Nyāya, according to which consciousness is revealed like an unconscious object 'ghaṭādi vat', but also against the Sānkhya in getting rid of the extreme dualism of the subject and the object of knowledge. But Prabhākara did not inquire what consciousness in itself was apart from its self-revealing nature 'svataḥprakāśatva', and, therefore, was forced to maintain a distinction between self and consciousness, with the unsatisfactory result that, while consciousness is made self-luminous, the Ātman is held to be non-luminous which is an inversion of the true relation between the two.

The Vedānta of Śankara asserted emphatically the eternal and the independent existence of consciousness which illuminated itself and everything else by its own light. It declared that the fundamental fact of the Universal consciousness is the presupposition of all knowledge. The subject and the object of knowledge are distinct and different only numerically, and not *per se*. They do not lie wholly outside the range of experience but are rather distinguished within one unitary and universal consciousness. This self-existing and pure consciousness has a double aspect of transcendental and empirical reality. Under the former, it is to be understood as one, universal, unchanging, inactive and distinctionless; while under the latter, as particular, changing, active, and full of distinctions.

## *CHAPTER IV.*

# THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

## CONSCIOUSNESS AND SELF-ILLUMINACY.

*Statement of the Problem*

One of the most important discussions about the nature of consciousness in Hindu philosophy is with regard to what is called the '*svataḥ prakāśatva*' or the self-luminosity of consciousness. The problem is of great philosophical significance in a true understanding of Hindu thought on the nature of consciousness. The question is, when an object is cognised, is the cognition cognised? Is it uncognised, immediately cognised or subsequently cognised by a later cognition? If it is uncognised, there would be the absurdity of an uncognised cognition cognising an object; and if it is cognised by another cognition, that would be cognised by yet another and the process would lead to an infinite regress, which amounts to the presence of an unsolved contradiction. It is therefore, declared by the Idealistic thought in general, that consciousness or cognition, whenever it arises, is directly and immediately cognised along with the object cognised. The cognition is neither cognised by a subsequent or a later mental perception, as held by the Realist, nor is it known by inference as held by Kumārila. There is no intervening psychical mode between a cognition and its cognition, i.e., all cognitions are self-cognised as soon as and when they arise. An uncognised cognition cannot reveal an object, and if in order to avoid the infinite regress, the cognition is made self-luminous at some intermediate stage, why not make it self-luminous at the very first stage?

According to the Idealists, therefore, consciousness is neither non-apprehended 'avedya', nor apprehended as an object 'vedya' but is self-apprehended or 'svavedya'. It is further asserted that consciousness is in this respect, quite unique. It is at once the source and the principle of all revelation, light and knowledge in the universe, which, while manifesting all objects by its light, is not itself manifested by any other light except itself. In other words, it is 'svayam jyotiḥ' and 'svaprakāśa'. Had it not been for the self-luminous consciousness, all the world would have remained enveloped in the darkness of non-apprehension, 'Viṣaya ajñāna', for in the absence of the apprehension of the apprehension, the process of awareness would not at all start. It is, therefore, eternally self-effulgent. It manifests itself by the same activity by which it manifests other objects, and does not need a second cognition to lead to its own awareness. Unlike other objects, it is sufficient unto itself in the matter of its awareness.

This view of self-illuminacy and uniqueness of consciousness has been vehemently opposed by the Realists, who grant to consciousness the rank only of an other-manifesting (Paraprakāśa) status. It is contended that consciousness is like the light in the eye, which need not itself be revealed in order to reveal other objects, and that in an act of cognition, it is usually the object that is cognised, and not its cognition. Consciousness is thus 'Paraprakāśa' and not 'svaprakāśa'.

The Idealists, on the other hand, maintain that consciousness is like the light of the lamp or the sun, which reveals both itself and other objects by the single act of its own shining, and is independent of another light in the matter of its own revelation. It would be absurd to think of a natural light which illuminating other objects, is itself unilluminated, and needs another light to manifest itself. Thus, the alternative to self-illuminacy is not other-illuminacy

but non-illuminacy. The choice is not as the Realists seem to think between 'svataḥprakāśatva' and 'paraprakāśatva', but between svataḥprakāśatva' and 'jaḍatva'. What is not self-luminous is not illuminating and if consciousnous is not self-luminous, it is virtually reduced to the position of an unconscious object, which would not explain knowledge and awareness.

*The Upaniṣads :*

The Upaniṣads are emphatic in their characterisation of the Ātman or the Puruṣa as self-luminous or self-effulgent. In the 'Bṛhadāraṇyaka', the self-luminosity of the 'Puruṣa' is established by an elaborate examination of the waking and the dream consciousness. 'Atrāyam puruṣaḥ svayam jyotir bhavati'.* When all the external lights including that of the body and the organs are extinguished, the Ātman whose reflection the intellect catches by reason of its nearness and purity, shines in its own eternal and pure light. The Kaṭha also has it, 'It shining, everything else shines, this universe shines in consequence of His light'.† The Chāndogya says 'His form is Light' 'Bhārupaḥ'.‡ Puruṣa is spoken of as 'Hṛdyantar jyotiḥ', the light within the heart.§ Muṇḍaka repeats 'tameva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam, tasya bhāsā sarvamidam vibhāti'. In Gītā 13.33., we read 'As the one sun, O Arjuna illumines the whole world, so the self, the knower of the field of this body illumines the whole body.‖ Thus consciousness is characterised as 'svayamprakāśa'.

In Tantrasāra, Āh. I, attributed to Abhinava Gupta, consciousness is taught to be of the nature

* *Bṛh.* 4.3.14.

† *Kaṭha* 5.15.

‡ *Chāndogya* 3.14.2.

§ *Bṛh.* 4.3.7.

‖ *Gītā* 13.33. "Kṣhetram Kṛetrī tathā Kṛtsnam prakāśyati".

of self-manifesting light, 'Prakāśarūpatā citśaktiḥ'.* And Kṣemarāja says that 'consciousness cannot be disproved as it is always shining and everything else is to be proved by the self-luminous consciousness'.† Consciousness is not to be perceived like an unconscious object by any other cognitive act : It is self revealed.‡

*The Advaita Vedānta :*

The most influential advocates of the view have been the Vedāntists of the Śankara school, the Yogācāra Vijñānavādins, the Prabhākar—a school of Pūrva Mīmānsā, and also the Sānkhya-Yoga. According to the Vedānta, a cognition is self-luminous as it would be absurd to admit a cognition of cognition. A cognition cannot be an object of cognition because the nature of an object is unconscious and there is an absolute difference between the natures of subject and object. A conscious subject can never become an object. It is contradictory to its nature. Nor can an object ever really take the character of a subject. Cognition being of the nature of consciousness cannot be made an object, and must, therefore, be self-revealing. Śankara in his bhāṣya on, G.K. 3.33. says that 'Brahman which is of the nature of one homogenous mass of eternal consciousness cannot, like the sun, depend upon another instrument of knowledge'.§ He observes that, since, all things can be classified as either knowledge or know able, "none except the Vaināśikās would admit a third knowledge which perceives the knowledge".|| A distinction between the unmanifested objects of knowledge and the self-manifesting knowledge is inevitable, and

* *Tantrasāra,* Āh. 1. Also *Devī Bhāgavatam* 7.32.12.13.

† *S.S.V.* Sūtra. 1.

‡ *D. Bhāg.* 7.32.12-13. "Caitanyasya na dṛśyatvam dṛśyatve jaḍamevatat, svaprakāśam ca caitanyam na pareṇa prakāśitam" 'tasmāt dīpavat svayam.'

§ 'Nityaprakāśasvarūpa iva savitā' 'na jñānāntaramapekṣate'.

|| *S.B. Praś. Up.* 6.2. "na tritīyas tad viṣayaḥ ity anavasthānupapattiḥ".

'a hundred Vaināśikās cannot make knowledge itself knowable', and this is as sure as they cannot revive a dead man'. The knowledge of knowledge 'jñeyasya jñeyatvam', or awareness of awareness is, therefore, a psychological absurdity. It should, however, be remembered that a cognition is self-luminous in a negative sense, i.e., it is not manifested by any other cognition and not in the positive sense that it is cognised by itself.

Consciousness, being the ultimate principle of revelation, cannot stand in need of a more ulterior principle of revelation for its own revelation. The light which reveals everything does not require a second light for its own manifestation. Thus all cognitions are self-luminous, which means that there is no intervening mental mode between the cognitive process and the cognition of it. There is a direct and immediate intellectual intuition of a cognition. If one cognition is to be known by another, and so on, it will lead to an infinite regress of cognitions which must be avoided at all costs.

*Srīharṣa* argues that the theory of self-luminosity of consciousness must be accepted for two main reasons even though it is at conflict with ordinary experience. Firstly, because the argument of presumption (Anyathānupapattiḥ) fully proves it, i.e., no other view of consciousness either stands criticism or is able to explain apprehension. Secondly, the ordinary distinction of the knower, the knowledge and the known which goes against the doctrine of the self-apprehension of cognition, is in reality not true, for ultimately, there is no difference between the cogniser and the cognition or between the cognition and the object cognised. "We have to abandon the view that the cognised is something different from the cognition, otherwise the consciousness 'I know' (when the cognition is the object cognised) would not be possible".*

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* *K.K.K.* p. 73. "Anyo jñātā anyaśca jñeya iti tyājyam iti jānāmīti vyavahārānyathānupapattyā".

*Vidyāraṇya* also holds cognitions to be self-cognised and immediately intuited. He criticises the Nyāya and the Bhaṭṭa view of the "cognitions of cognition", and agrees with the opinion that "cognition of cognition" would imply that "two moments of time exist together" which is absurd.* Cognitions must be immediately apprehended as soon as they arise without any further act of apprehension.†

*Citsukhāmunī* in his *Tattva Pradīpikā* makes an exhaustive study of the problem of self-illuminacy and claims that if cognitions were not self-luminous, no practical activity of life could go on, for all 'Vyavahāra' is based upon an implicit confidence in our cognitions as cognised.‡

*Dṛg Dṛśya Viveka* emphasises the self-luminosity of consciousness and defines it as 'svayam vibhāty athānyāni bhāsayet sādhanam vinā'.§ The very first verse reads :—"The form is perceived, the eye is the perceiver, the eye is perceived, and the mind is the perceiver, the mind is perceived and the witness is the perceiver, but the witness is not perceived by any other".|| The meaning obviously is that the ultimate principle of light or consciousness has to be conceived as self-illuminated, and as independent of other instruments of revelation. How can one hope to reveal the *source* itself of all particular lights? If consciousness is not admitted to be 'svayamjyotiḥ', the process of one cognition being cognised by another would never come to an end.

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* *V.P.S.* p. 55. "Pramitigocara pramityantarāṅgīkāreṇa yugapaṭ kāla dvyāvasthāna prasaṅgāt".

† *V.P.S.* p. 57. "Avyavahitatvād anubhavaḥ svaprakāśa iti".

‡ *Citsukhī* : 1.7. "Ātmanaḥ svaprakāśatvam ko nivārayatum kṣamaḥ".

§ *D.D.V.* 1.5.

|| *D.D.V.* 1.1. "Rūpam dṛśyam locanam dṛk, tad dṛśyam, dṛk tu mānasam, dṛśyam dhī vṛttyah sākṣī dṛg eva na tu dṛśyate".

*Prabhākara view :*

We have already seen in the last chapter that according to this view, the self-luminous consciousness illumines all the three factors of a knowledge event, the knower, the known, and itself. To Mīmānsā, all cognitions as such are valid, and it is the invalidity of cognition which is to be established by 'Pramāṇas', and not the self-established 'Pratyaya'. The view is based upon the Jaimini Sūtra 1.1.5. 'tasmāt-pramāṇam, anapekṣatvāt', which has been subsequently developed both by Prabhākara and Kumārila. Prabhākara quotes 'Sābara' and says that, it is indeed strange how a cognition can be said to apprehend an object, and yet be invalid.* Kumārila supports the view by saying that 'the validity of cognition must consist in its being an apprehension'.† If all cognitions were not valid, whence could we have any confidence in our cognitions? Knowledge, at the time of manifesting an object, manifests itself. When A sees B, there is, subsequently, seen no doubt in the mind of A as to that cognition. The denial of self-cognisibility to cognitions must lead to the absurdity of the negation of apprehension itself which is admitted by all. And, therefore, even when the cognition may not be found in agreement with the real state of things which would prove its invalidity, the cognition as cognition cannot but be accepted as valid, for, even though the thing cognised may not be there, the cognition is there alright. And when the subsequent cognition disproves the validity of a previous cognition, it must be regarded as destroying the validity that *belonged* to the previous cognition as cognised. Congitions are invalid only in so far as they are affected by some

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* "Vipratiṣiddham idam abhidhīyate, bravīti ca vitathāṁcheti". *Bṛhatī*. p. 26.

† *Ś.V. Sūtra* 2. p. 61. Benares. 1898 (47-61). 'tasmādbodhātma katvena prāptā buddheḥ pramāṇatā. 53.

fault of the instrument of cognition or are later sublated by another cognition.*

According to Prabhākara, it is only the consciousness that is self-luminous and not the self. Both the self and the external objects are non-luminous. Self is not self-luminous because it is apprehended by a cognition. But a cognition is luminous because it need not be apprehended by another cognition. Here we see clearly the effects of the anomalous position of Prabhākara with regard to the relationship between consciousness and the self suggested in the previous chapter. It is extraordinary indeed that consciousness which is held to be a quality of the self, be regarded as luminous and independently lighted, while the self be regarded as devoid of it, and as depending on its own quality for its own manifestation. This comes out of not fully analysing the exact relationship between substance and attribute.

*The Sānkhya-Yoga view :*

According to this view, a cognition is a psychic function of 'Buddhi' which is in essence unconscious and as such, cannot be an object of its own consciousness. It can neither apprehend an object nor manifest itself. It is apprehended by the self whose nature alone is of pure intelligence 'prakāśa'. Yoga Sūtra 4.19, 'na tat svabhāsam dṛśyatvāt', explains why the mind or 'Buddhi' cannot enlighten itself, since it itself is the object of sight. The Vaiśāradī on the same Sūtra explains why self-illumination though inexplainable in the case of the mind is not so in the case of the Self. For, "his self-enlightenment is nothing but an enlightenment which is not dependent upon any other thing, and it is not his being an object

* *S.D.* p. 60. 'svataḥprāmāṇyam tasmāt prāptam artha-anyathātva karaṇadoṣajnānābhyām apodyate iti avaśyam aṅgīkaraṇīyam'. *S.D.* p. 139. 'yatra prayatnenānviṣyamāno api karaṇadoṣo bādhakajñānam vā nopalabhyate tat pramāṇam itaraccāpramāṇam'.

of experience."* The mind-stuff which is an object of seeing does not illumine itself. It is the reflection of the self only that throws light. The mind-stuff undergoes modifications and is an object of experience, while the self does not undergo mutation and is not an object of experience. Thus, it is the self-luminous self that comprehends both the object and the cognition.

According to the Yoga Sūtras, the theory of the secondary cognitions 'anuvyavasāya' of the Nyāya is considered as unsatisfactory and as leading to confusion of memory. For, if we are to believe in cognitions of cognitions, there would be as many psychic 'saṅskāras' as cognitions of cognitions, and consequently, there would be as many reminiscences.† Hence the conscious principle alone is taken as self-revealed.‡

*The realist view :*

According to the Nyāya, in 'I perceive this', there are two cognitions, the first and the original cognition of 'this' which is technically called 'Vyavasāya', and secondly, the 'I perceive', or the secondary cognition called 'anuvyavasāya'. While the former is brought about by the contact of the cogniser with the object, the latter is brought about by his contact with the mind. The first cognition that we have is never in the form 'I cognise', but in the form of 'it is this', and this is very much in agreement with our daily experience, as all our activities proceed from the definite cognition of 'things' and not from the cognition of that cognition. It is the first cognition that apprehends the things and it has nothing

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* *Y.V.* 4.19. 'aparādhīnaprakāśato hi-asya svayamprakāśatā, na-anubhava karmataḥ'.

† *Y.S.* 4.21. 'Cittāntaradṛśye buddhibuddheratiprasaṅgaḥ, smṛtisaṁkaraśca'.

‡ *S.S.* 5.51. 'Nijaśakty abhirvyakteḥ svataḥ pramāṇyam'.

to do with its own apprehension. The latter cognition is not denied, but it appears only subsequently. The Naiyāyikās hold that cognitions are not self-cognised, but are cognisable by means of mental perception 'mānasapratyakṣa'. According to them, consciousness is neither inferred from the cognisedness (Jñātatā) as held by Bhaṭṭa, nor is self-cognised as held by the Vedāntist and the Yogācāra, but is perceived by another cognition. "Jñānam jñānāntar avedyam, prameyatvāt paṭādivat". A cognition can never turn upon itself, it is only 'paraprakāśa' and not 'svaprakāśa'.

*Nyāya Bhāṣya on self-illuminacy :*

Nyāya Bhāṣya maintains that a cognition is perceived by another cognition and that cognitions are not self-cognisable.* Nyāya Sūtra 2.1.19 raises the question of the cognisability of the means of cognition and the Bhāṣya, faced with the alternative of either self-illuminacy or infinite regress, says that, 'it is according to circumstances that anything can become an object of perception as well as an instrument of perception'.† Thus, the soul is the *cogniser* under one condition, and the *cognised* under the other. To the charge of infinite regress it replies as follows :—'all usage could be rightly explained on the basis of distinction between objects of cognition and the instruments of cognition, there is nothing to be accomplished by the infinite regress',‡ which means that the objection of infinite regress is dismissed as too theoretical.

Thus the Nyāya satisfies itself with the conclusion that cognitions are not self-luminous, because

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* *N.B.* 2.1.19. 'indriyārthasannikarṣotpannam jñānam ātma manasoḥ saṅyoga viśeṣādātmasamavāyāt ca sukhādivat gṛhyate'.

† *Ibid.* 'evam prameyam sati kiñcidarthajātam upalabdhi hetutvāt pramāṇa prameya vyavasthā labhate'.

‡ *Ibid.* 'na cāsti vyavahārāntaram anavasthā sādhanīyam'.

the hypothesis is not necessary for the practical purpose "of acquiring merit, prosperity, happiness and final release", with which all speculative interest is dominated in Nyāya Philosophy.

*Criticism of the above:*

This view is objected to by the Vedāntist on the ground of the impossibility of a real 'Anuvyavasāya', for even supposing that a cognition is perceived by another cognition (which is in itself absurd), he asks "does the second cognition arise when the first cognition continues to exist or when it is destroyed?" The first alternative is impossible, for according to N. V., cognitions are successive and not simultaneous. The second alternative is also impossible, for if the second arises when the first is no more, what will be cognised by the second cognition? If it cognises the non-existent first, then it is illusory and not real cognition.

An attempt to answer to the above is made by *Gaṅgeśa* in his *Tattvacintāmaṇi** by creating new positions and fresh difficulties. For the answers, that firstly the 'Anuvyavasāya' appears at the very moment the 'Vyavasāya' is destroyed, and secondly, that it is the 'jñānatva' that survives and qualifies the soul and not any particular cognition, do not alter the situation. This will either again lead to the absurdity of infinite regress or will invalidate all cognition, for there is no reason why we should have any faith at all in our first cognitions, and yet it is a matter of daily experience that no one doubts the facts of his having a cognition. There is a sense in which the Realist Naiyāyika too accepts the self-revealing nature of consciousness, for he admits that at least the 'anuvyavasāya' is self-cognised, if not the 'vyavasāya'.

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* *Tattvacintāmaṇi*. p. 804-8. Bib. Ind. Vol. 98. Part 1. 'Anuvyavasāya vāda'.

The theory of self-illuminacy has been objected to by the Realist on the ground that one and the same thing cannot be both a subject and an object. But to this the Vedāntist has ever replied in the words of 'Śriharṣa' 'that the Vedāntist does not admit the alleged incompatibility of subject and the object'; and that neither self-consciousness nor any kind of cognition would be possible, if subject and object were essentially distinct entities.* Besides, the Idealist who maintains the self-luminosity of cognition does not therefore, subscribe to the theory that the one and the same thing ever becomes both the subject and the object. In fact, to object to the theory of the self-cognisibility of cognitions, on the above mentioned difficulty, is to misunderstand the fundamentals of the theory. To be self-revealed is not at all to be revealed as an object, which is in truth the theory of the opponent, but is aa action by itself and unique.

*Kumārila Bhaṭṭa :*

Kumārila contends that a cognition does not apprehend itself when it apprehends an object. Though a cognition is of the nature of light in illuminating external objects, it still depends upon some other activity to manifest itself. It cannot apprehend itself when it is engaged in the act of apprehending an object. It is the nature of the 'jñāna-Prakāśakatva' that it illumines an external object, but is not capable of illuminating itself, for which it must depend upon another act, "Bodhāyānyat pratīkṣate". Its illuminating nature consists in its illuminating an external object, but not in self-awareness.† Cognition is not 'Svataḥprakāśa' but only 'paraprakāśa'.

Unlike the 'Tripuṭīpratyakṣa' cognition of Prabhākara, an act of cognition according to this school,

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* *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya*. p. 69.

† *S. Vārttika*. Śūnya Vāda 187, 'Prakāśatvam bāhye arthe śaktyabhāvāt tu nā'tmani'.

comprises four factors, firstly, an agent or the subject 'jñātṛ', secondly, an object of knowledge, 'jñeya', thirdly, an instrumental cognition or 'karaṇajñāna', and lastly, a result of knowledge, 'jñātatā'. Just as an act of cooking produces cookedness in the object, rice, so the act of cognition produces 'cognisedness' in the object, and from this 'cognisedness' as an effect, we infer the existence of its cause, viz. cognition. Thus a cognition is inferred from the cognisedness 'jñātatā' of its object. A cognition cannot be perceived either by itself or by any other cognition, but is inferred from the 'cognisedness' in its object. 'jñātatānumeyam jñānam'.*

*Criticism of Kumārila :*

This hypothesis of the 'cognisedness' is almost universally rejected and Śrīdhara points out that the argument from the side of the notion of cognisedness commits the fallacy of *hysteron proteron* for, cognisedness must be the result and not the cause of cognition.†

*Keśava Miśra* and *Śivāditya* too consider the 'jñātatā' as an absolutely unnecessary hypothesis. 'jñātatā' is nothing separate from the relation between knowledge and its object, which is the unique relation of 'jñāna sambandha'.‡ To be cognised is not a quality of the object, but a relation '*sui generis*'. The argument about the production of a new quality of 'cognisedness' in the object on the analogy of rice cooked is untenable, since we distinctly perceive cookedness in the rice when it passes from the state of uncooked rice to the cooked rice, while we do not perceive any quality of cognisedness or any such

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* Vide Pārthasārathimiśra, *Śāstradīpikā*. p. 157-161.

† *N.K.* p. 96.

‡ *T.B.* p. 54-55. 'jñāna viṣayatvātiriktayor jñātatāyāḥ abhāvāt'. *S.P.* p. 58. 'jñātatā jñāna viṣaya sambandha eva'.

change in the object cognised.* Besides, if a cognition is known through the peculiar property of 'cognisedness', this 'cognisedness' would be known by the production of another cognisedness in it, and so on *ad infinitum*. And if, in order to avoid this regress, cognisedness is regarded as self-luminous, we may as well admit cognition itself as self-luminous.†

*Śāntarakṣita's criticism of Kumārila:*

According to Vijñānavāda too, self-revelation is the essential nature of cognitions,‡ and so Kumārila's theory of the other-manifesting nature of cognitions comes for a bitter attack in '*Tattva Saṃgraha*'. Śāntarakṣita quotes from '*Śloka Vārttika*', Śūnya Vāda, verses (184-187) and criticises the theory of 'Paraprakāśa' as untenable.§

Kumārila contends that a cognition has no power to manifest itself, its illuminacy consists only in its showing an external object. To this, Śāntarakṣita's reply is that a cognition *must* apprehend itself, for when a cognition apprehends an object, it must either be distinct from it or non-distinct. If a cognition is distinct from an object, it never apprehends it, and if it is non-distinct from it, then it *is* apprehended in the apprehension of the object.

Śāntarakṣita, therefore, shows that one of the two consequences must follow if cognitions are not admitted to be self-revealing. Either the object remains unapprehended or there is an infinite regress, for, if a cognition is by nature unconscious (jaḍa) and cannot apprehend itself, then the cognition being itself imperceptible, the apprehension of the object

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* *N.K.* p. 96. 'Ananubhavāt'.

† *N.K.* p. 97. 'Athāyam svaprakāśa-jñāne kaḥ pradveṣaḥ'.

‡ Ā'tma-samvedanaṃ eva sadaiva jñānam'. *Tatt. Saṃ. Pañjikā*. Vol. I. p. 599. verse 1999.

§ *Tattva Saṃgraha*. verses 2012-13-21-22.

also will become imperceptible, there would thus be no knowledge. Or, if the cognition of an object requires another cognitive act to reveal itself, then this cognitive act will also require another cognitive act and so on. It will thus lead to an infinite regress, and we can avoid it only if we assume that all cognitions are self-luminous, and that they do not require any other cognitive act to manifest them.*

Jayanta puts the same Vijñānavāda arguments thus:

If the Realist admits that a cognition manifests an unconscious object which cannot manifest itself, he must also admit that a cognition cannot apprehend an object until the cognition itself is first apprehended, even as a luminous lamp cannot manifest other objects without itself being first perceived. If it be replied that a cognition cannot be apprehended at the time of its production and when it is manifesting other objects, the answer is that, "it can never be apprehended at some other time, because it will remain the same and not acquire any new characteristics by virtue of which it will be apprehended at some other time'.†

This is similar to the Vedānta reply to the Nyāya position that if a cognition is not apprehended at the time of the first cognition (Vyavasāya), it will not be apprehended at all. Hence the Realist must admit that there is an apprehension of a cognition before there can be an apprehension of an object.‡ Thus it is said, that an object cannot be perceived unless its cognition is also apprehended. 'Apratyakṣopalambhasya nārthadṛṣṭiḥ prasiddhyati'.§

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* *T.S.* Verses 2025-2022, 27, 28 and Pañjikā.

† *N.M.* p. 537-38. 'na cet kālāntare api na syāt'. etc.

‡ *N.M.* p. 538. 'Arthagrahaṇa vādināpi pūrva jñāna grahaṇaṃ avaśyāśrayaṇīyam'.

§ *N.M.* p. 538. 'Quoted from Dharmakīrti'.

But the Realist retorts that if cognitions were self-luminous, they would appear in the form of 'I am blue', and not 'this is blue'.* But the objection hardly appears reasonable. By the self-luminosity of cognition is not meant that cognitions are cognisers or that they have a 'self'. A cognition should not appear in the form of 'I am blue', if the cognition is not the 'I'. Hence the critic is beside the point, for self-luminosity means only the immediate perceptibility of cognitions without suggesting that cognitions have a self, or that a cognition perceives itself.

*'Svapramāṇatva and Svaprakāśatva', an inconsistency in Kumārila's Philosophy :*

The Mimānsā is noted for its unusual view of the authoritativeness and the validity of all cognitions as such. The view is taken from the 'Jaimini Sūtra 1, 2, and 5, and is developed by both Kumārila and Prabhākara in their respective works of *Ślokavārttika* and *Bṛhatī*. Kumārila expounds the view in *Śloka vārttika*, *Sūtra* II. It is maintained that all cognitions as soon as they arise are inherently endowed with validity. Thus, starting from the supposition of an inherent quality of truth of the cognitions, what is to be established by subsequent investigation, is not their truth, but their falsity. The question is asked, wherein the truth of a cognition can lie? It can lie either in its own self or outside itself, i.e. in the excellence of the sense organs etc. But if the truth of a cognition depended upon external conditions, and did not originally belong to it, then, for the practical experiences of life, one would have to wait till the soundness of the external apparatus of knowledge has been established beyond doubt.

Let us take an example. If a man, with the intention to write, perceives a pen and picks it up,

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* *N.M.* p. 541. 'nāpi svaprakāśaṃ jñānam aham nīlam itya pratibhāsāt'.

he does so under the assumption of a belief in the validity of his perception. In other words, his cognition is its own 'pramāṇa'. The 'Pramāṇatā' of the cognition comes from within itself, 'Svataḥ'. No one after seeing a pen ordinarily broods :—'let me think if this perception of mine is valid, for it may as well be invalid. Are my senses in perfectly excellent condition and are other circumstances of cognition favourable to a valid perception? Am I sure that it is only a pen I have just seen and no other object? etc. etc.' If such was the normal procedure of thought after perception, all practical activity of life would become paralysed. But such, however, is not the case, and this establishes the self-validity of our cognitions. And therefore only those cognitions are false which are either due to defects in our sense organs or which are later on sublated. But all other cognitions are *ipso facto* true.*

Kumārila goes on to add, that if cognitions did not have this 'Śakti' of self-validity, nothing could produce it in them. If the validity of a cognition is made to depend upon conditions other than itself, the process would lead to an infinite regress without establishing the validity of cognition at all. Hence the 'Svataḥprāmāṇyam' of all cognitions. While in other systems of epistemology, it is the truth of a cognition which has to be ascertained, in 'Mīmānsā' epistemology, on the contrary, it is the falsity which has to be established. The validity of an apprehension cannot come from outside 'parataḥ', and even when a cognition is later on sublated and disproved, it only disproves the validity that originally belonged to the previous cognition. If validity did not already belong to the previous cognition, it could not later on be set aside.

The question now is, how is this theory of the 'Svataḥpramāṇatva', i.e. the intrinsic validity of cogni-

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* *S.V.* Sūtra II.

tions, related to the 'Svataḥprakāśatva' or the intrinsic cognisibility of cognitions. It seems reasonably clear that the two theories mutually imply one another and are complementary if not actually identical. To say that a cognition is inherently valid is only to say that it is self-luminous. 'Svataḥpramāṇatva means only 'Svataḥjñānatva'. Just as when one has perceived an object, he does not doubt that he has perceived that object, similarly one does not doubt that he has *cognised* when he has *cognised* an object ; the reason being ; that in both cases, cognition or awareness carries its own revelation along with itself. If cognitions were not self-luminous and had to depend for their own cognisibility upon other conditions, then their intrinsic validity too, could not be immediately and directly established. In fact, the concept of the intrinsic validity of cognition presupposes the intrinsic cognisibility of cognitions, if at all any distinctions can be made between the two concepts of 'Svataḥpramāṇatva' and 'Svataḥprakāśatva'.

One looks in vain for anything more than the self-luminosity in the concept of self-validity. Self-validity hardly means anything more than self-cognisibility, which is the same as Dharma-Kīrti's famous assertion, that if one does not believe in the cognition as directly cognised, one could never establish the cognition of anything. Besides, almost the very same arguments of infinite regress and the impossibility of apprehension, apply against the theory of non-self-luminosity of cognitions which are advanced against the extrinsic validity of cognitions. Our point is that hardly any difference of any importance can at all be made between the above two concepts.

Yet strangely enough, Kumārila who advocates the theory of 'Svataḥpramāṇatva' in Sūtra II of his *Śloka Vāttika* turns later on, an opponent of the theory of self-luminosity of cognitions in the 'Śūnyavāda' of the same Vārttika. His criticism of self-

illuminacy of cognitions, is unsatisfactory, half-hearted and unspirited. No serious argument is advanced except the analogy that cognition is like the light in the eye which only illumines other objects but not itself. Just as it is not in the power of the eye to illumine itself, so is the case with cognitions too.

We have considered in detail elsewhere,* the inappropriateness of the analogy of the eye and the cognition and have also shown the difficulties of a theory of non-self-luminosity. The point here is to consider if one can reasonably hold the theory of the intrinsic validity of cognitions and in the same breath deny the theory of the intrinsic cognisibility of cognitions.

It seems clear that what is not intrinsically cognised cannot be established as intrinsically valid also, for what is dependent for its cognisibility upon later cognitions and inferences, cannot guarantee its own validity which can then be only extrinsic and due to external conditions. If the intrinsic validity of cognitions is to be admitted in order to avoid an infinite regress, the same must also be the case with the intrinsic cognition of cognitions. Kumārila admits that if validity did not belong to the cognitions inherently and intrinsically it could not be stamped on them from outside. Exactly the same must be said with regard to cognisibility too. If cognisibility did not belong to the cognitions intrinsically and inherently at the very first stage, it could not, at any later stage, be imported into them.

Cognitions are either cognised or uncognised and if they are cognised, it is far more satisfactory to hold that they are immediately cognised than they are subsequently cognised. Nor can we maintain the view that cognitions are uncognised, for in the first place, it would be absurd to maintain that objects

* Chapter IV.

are cognised without the cognition being cognised, and secondly, all systems of thought agree in holding that the cognitions *are* cognised by some means and at some stage.

If the above analysis of the relationship of the two concepts of the self-cognisibility and self-validity is correct, the question is, why did Kumārila contradict himself? It seems that Kumārila has been inadvertently led to a criticism of 'Svaprakāśavāda' in his chapter on 'Śūnyavāda' by the force of an overpowering anxiety to combat the 'Vijñānavāda' theory of the essential sameness of the subject and the object of knowledge. It is generally feared, that the concept of self-illuminacy of consciousness or the theory of immediate perception, if established, would add weight to the subjectivist theory of 'Vijñānavāda'. Kumārila, therefore like most anti-subjectivists, is anxious to maintain an absolute externality, independence, and otherness of the world of objects as against the theory of their being only a form of the inner subjective series of cognitions. As against the subjectivist Vijñānavādī, who does not make an absolute distinction between the subjective and the objective, it is thought necessary to uphold, that the two separate worlds of the inner cognitions and the outer objects, do never fuse into one another or appear indifferently both as subjective states and as outer objects. Kumārila's process of mind would be like this :—To admit that cognitions are self-luminous is to admit that an object can be both a subject and an object, and to admit this is to play the game of the subjectivists, *ergo*-cognitions cannot be self-cognised.

Kumārila therefore maintains, that nothing can be both a subject and an object, and that the two functions of the knower and the known cannot belong to one and the same cognition. Cognition, therefore, cannot be self-cognised, because a wide gulf between the knower and the known must at all cost be maintained in order to combat the subjectivists. Cogni-

tions cannot be admitted to be their own objects, whatever may be the consequences of a theory of cognition by another cognition or by inference.

Thus, pressed by the need to maintain an absolute distinction between the internal states of cognition and the external world of objects as against the solipsist, Kumārila forgets what he had previously propounded in his second sūtra, pressed under a similar need of maintaining the immediate and intrinsic validity of the Vedic injunction. He obviously thought, that without the theory of an intrinsic validity of cognitions, the inherent authoritativeness of the Vedas could not be maintained. But in his zeal to demolish completely the subjective idealism, he overshot the mark by attacking the 'Svataḥprakāśatva' of congitions, little seeing the inconsistency involved in it and his own earlier position.

It is not a little difficult to see why, in order to restore the objectivity of our cognitions as against the subjectivists, it should at all be considered obligatory to deny self-cognisibility of cognitions. Yet the practice has been fairly common with a certain section of philosophers in spite of the repeated declaration, that by the theory of the 'Svataḥprakāśatva' of cognitions is not meant, either that cognitions do not have an extra-mental basis, or that cognitions are their own subject and object. On the contrary, a theory of self-luminosity of cognition is perfectly compatible with the belief in the fullest externality of the object of cognition, as shown by Śankara, who retains both the self-luminosity as well as the objectivity of cognitions, and yields to none in his opposition to the Vijñānavāda subjectivist. To say that cognitions are grasped immediately and simultaneously along with the objects cognised, is not to say that cognitions and their extra-mental substratum are identical, which is the conclusion feared by the anti-subjectivist. Nor to say that cognitions are self-luminous is at all to maintain

with the Buddhist Vijñānavāda, its theory of the non-reality of objects apart from the cognitions. Yet the two contentions have often been unfortunately confused and taken as necessarily implying one another, and philosophers, with the exception of Śankara and Prabhākara, have not taken pains to separate the two distinct issues of the self-cognisibility of cognitions and of an absolute subjectivity of cognitions. The former, as an epistemological problem, is far narrower in scope than the latter problem of the ontological status of objects. The epistemological doctrine of the self-cognisibility of cognition can in no way be identified with a metaphysical doctrine of the mental solipsism of reality.

Kumārila is therefore inconsistent, for either the cognitions are not intrinsically valid or they are also intrinsically cognisable. He cannot have it both ways, i.e. retain 'Svapramāṇatva' and destroy 'Svaprakāśatva', for the two notions stand or fall together. It is refreshing to note in this connection, that Prabhākara, who fully shares with Kumārila his theory of the self-validity of cognitions as well as his opposition to the subjectivist Vijñānavāda, consistently maintains, unlike Kumārila, the theory of the self-luminosity of cognitions too.

*Śrīdhara's criticism of Self-illuminacy :*

Śrīdhara criticises Prabhākara by saying that a cognition is not necessarily self-aware, and consciousness does not necessarily involve self-consciousness, for instance, in 'this is a jar', the self and the cognition are not apprehended ; there is simply the apprehension of the object jar.* The primary cognition is always of the object only, but this cognition also may be apprehended in the secondary apprehension, 'I know the jar', but it is not always so. This secondary

* *N.K.* p. 91. 'Ghaṭo' yam ityetasmin pratīyamāne jñātṛjñānayorapratibhāsanāt'.

consciousness does reveal itself and the self, but in it there is the mental perception of the jar as qualified by the cognition of the self.* And therefore originally, and in itself, cognition is not self-aware. It would be too much to bring consciousness and self-consciousness both at the same level. Thus while the possibility of awareness of a cognition is not denied by Śrīdhara, he denies that all primary cognitions carry their own self-awareness along with them. According to him, consciousness is not self-cognisable specially as we have no instance of one and the same thing being both the object and the instrument.† The lamp too which is cognised by man is made cognisable by the eye. But this objection is based upon a misunderstanding. The fact that the lamp is made cognisable by the eye does not render the light of the lamp non-luminous, just as the fact that the sunlight is not revealed in the absence of certain conditions does not render the sunlight non-self-revealing. The self-luminosity of consciousness is not affirmed in any antagonism to usual psychology of perception, but is only to declare that whenever consciousness is produced, it is cognised at once without further mental act to cognise it. But Śrīdhara asks, 'What is it that is cognised? is it the object cognised or the cognition cognised? If the latter, then instead of an object being cognised, the cognition would be cognised'.‡

But the above is a needless dialectic, for cognition is never separate from the object cognised. All cognition is the cognition of an object, and hence every case of self-illuminacy of cognition is also a case of the cognition of an object. Here Śrīdhara

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* *N.K.* p. 92. 'Ghaṭam aham jānāmīti jñāne jñātṛjñānaviśiṣṭasyārthasya mānasa pratyakṣatā'.

† *N.K.* p. 90-91. 'Ekasya karma-karaṇādi bhāve dṛṣṭāntābhāvāt'.

‡ *N.K.* p. 91. 'Yadyarthasya prakāśas tadutpatter arathasya saṃvedanaṃ syāt na tu svasya etc. etc.'

makes an absolute distinction between cognition and the object cognised which is hardly justifiable. If there is no cognition of the cognition in 'I see a jar', where is the guarantee of the real existence of the cognition of the jar itself which the Realist takes for granted? And, hence, Śrīharṣa meets the Realist with his own weapon when he demands a guarantee for the reality of the cognition itself on which all other operations depend, 'What is there to indicate that the *cognition* is real? why should it not be unreal?* Thus whenever cognition takes place, there never arises the doubt, 'do I cognise?' or 'do I not cognise?' which clearly proves that cognitions are self-revealing.

*Jayanta's criticism of self-illuminacy:*

But the most vehement criticism of self-illuminacy of consciousness comes from the *Nyāya Māñjarī* of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa. His criticism is confined firstly to the emphasis on the other-manifesting nature of consciousness, and secondly to a denial of the notion of the 'aparokṣatva' of consciousness, which is a corollary of 'svaprakāśatva'. The doctrine of 'Svaprakāśatva' is allied to the theory of immediate intuition of consciousness which also has to be combated by the great Realist Jayanta.

Consciousness according to Jayanta manifests other objects but not itself. It is not self-luminous because it does not manifest itself when it apprehends other objects. It is like the illumination produced in the eye which illumines an object and not itself. Just as in order to manifest the colour of an object it is not necessary for the eye to be itself manifested, similarly, a cognition too, does not require an apprehension of itself in order to manifest its object.† Self-manifestation is not necessary for other-manifestation.

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* *K.K.K.* p. 52. 'Ko brūte, satī sā vṛttiḥ, asatyeva na kutaḥ'.

† *N.M.* p. 541. 'Upalambhotpāda evārtha-dṛṣṭiḥ, na punarupalambhadṛṣṭiḥ'.

The essential nature of a cognition is to manifest its object.* The reply to such an untenable position has already been given by the Vedāntist and the Vijñānavādin that if the cognition is not cognised, the object too could not be cognised.† It is contradictory to suppose that an object is perceptible if its cognition is imperceptible. The unmanifested cannot manifest an object without also manifesting itself. The analogy of the eye is not applicable; for neither the light of the eye is a cogniser nor is it a cognition. The light in the eye is not the same thing as the light of consciousness 'cit prakāśa'. The three types of light, viz. of the eye, of the physical lamp, and of the 'caitanya' consciousness, are to be clearly distinguished. Much confusion in the controversy has been brought in by confusing the one with the other on the basis of part resemblance. The eye is only an instrument, and may itself be hidden, and yet achieve its purpose of showing an object, the lamp illumines only in the sense of dispelling darkness, while it is the light of consciousness alone which illuminates in the sense of making known an object, as opposed to the non-apprehension of an object or 'viṣaya ajñāna'.

It is interesting to note the analogies of the Realist and the Idealist in illustration of their respective positions with regard to the self-luminosity of cognition. The Vedāntist takes the analogy of the light of the lamp and the Realist that of the light of the eye to establish his point, both forgetting for the moment that consciousness is in reality like none of these, and that the anologies are meant to convey only the sense of a particular epistemological peculiarity. Jayanta finds fault with the analogy of the lamp when it is advanced to show that a cognition should be self-apprehended even as the lamp is. The analogy is false he says, because a cognition illumines an

* *N.M.* p. 541. 'Arthaprakāśātmaiva khalūpalambhaḥ'.
† *K.K.K.* p. 50. 'Anyathātu bodha svarūpam eva na siddhayet'.

object in quite a different sense from that, in which a lamp illumines an object. There is an essential difference between the two, and while both are of the nature of illumination, one is conscious, while the other is unconscious. Hence we cannot argue that just as light must first be perceived in order to illumine other objects, so a cognition must first be apprehended in order to manifest its object.* One would have, on the contrary, supposed that the essential difference between consciousness and the lamp would be counted more in favour of the self-illuminacy of consciousness than in favour of the lamp, but Jayanta draws a different conclusion, and infers from this analogy a character of consciousness which makes it 'para-prakāśa', and not 'svaprakāśa'.

Jayanta's next argument is that we never have an experience of a self-luminous object in the world.† But a 'light' and a 'word', 'śabda', are obviously such objects. A word manifests itself, its meaning and an object, all at once; so does a light. According to Jayanta, a word and light are not self-luminous, because they also depend upon other conditions to manifest themselves. Like Śrīdhara, he also argues against the self-luminosity of consciousness on the basis of its dependence on other factors in the psychology of cognition, which, however, is never controverted. What is controverted is only the cognition of cognition by a subsequent and later cognition. It is not realised that the theory of self-luminosity of consciousness just establishes a third alternative of possibility between 'Avedyatva' and 'Vedyatva'. It is held that consciousness is neither an 'Avedya' nor 'Vedya', because it is 'Svavedya'. Citsukhā defines self-consciousness as 'Avedyatve sati aparokṣa vyavahāra yogyatā.'‡ It is the possibility of this distinction

* *N.M.* p. 542.

† *N.M.* p. 542. 'Svaprakāśasya, kasyacidapy adṛṣṭatvāt'.

‡ Citsaukhā *Tattvapradīpikā*—Svaprakāśa Vāda.

between 'Vedya' and 'avedyatve sati vyavahāra yogyatā' due to 'aparokṣatva' that is missed by the Realist in this discussion.

But the theory of 'Aparokṣajñāna' too, is regarded as contradictory by Jayanta. To him, the self cannot be an object of immediate intuition for the same reason for which it cannot be an object of mediate perception. The self or consciousness is either an object of mediate perception, or it is not an object of any kind of knowledge at all.*

Thus, Jayanta denies the self-luminosity of consciousness on the basis of its dependence on other instruments of cognition on the analogy of the "light" and the "word." He tries to establish only the other-manifesting quality of consciousness, without really seeing the contradiction involved, either in the apprehension of an object through an unapprehended cognition, or in the infinite regress, if one cognition is to be known by another. He is also hampered in his reasoning by not keeping before him the differences in the analogies of the eye, the lamp and consciousness.

*Rāmānuja's criticism of Self-illuminacy:*

According to Rāmānuja, who is called an 'Ardha-Svaprakāśa-Vādī, consciousness does manifest itself under certain conditions but not to all persons under all conditions and at all times. "It is self-luminous in the sense that it manifests itself at the present moment through its own being to its own substrate".† Let us examine this position in some detail. We read 'The contention that consciousness is not an object, holds good for the knowing self at the time

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* *N.M.* p. 432. 'Pratyakṣaśca na bhavati aparokṣaśca bhavati iti citram'.

† R.B. 1.1.1. p. 27. 'Vartamāna daśāyām sva-sattaiva svāśrayaṃ prati prakāśamānam'.

it illumines other things, but there is no absolute rule as to all consciousness never being anything but self-luminous, for common observation shows that the consciousness of one person may become the object of the cognition of another'.* So that, consciousness is sometimes luminous and sometimes not, a really difficult position to maintain. To say that there is a time when consciousness is not luminous is virtually to give up the point in favour of self-illuminacy altogether, for a thing can neither take up a quality that does not really belong to it, nor can it discard a quality which belongs to it (by Svarūpa). To argue, as Rāmānuja has done, that consciousness illumines itself at some times and under certain circumstances, is either to altogether give up the distinction of consciousness and its modifications or to play with the term "consciousness" loosely. The consciousness of a person when it is known by another, and is in the state of an object in the mind of another, is quite different from the consciousness of the knowing person who is aware of it. There is no difference between one object and another as 'objects of consciousness' even though one of the two objects of consciousness happens to be the previous 'consciousness of another person'. Consciousness, in its essence, as consciousness is all alike. The difference is not between one state of consciousness and another (which again, as states of consciousness are similar), but between a state of consciousness and consciousness as such. It is this difference that Rāmānuja overlooks when he asserts that consciousness is not luminous because it is later on known as an object. Consciousness is not identical with its own modifications which are not claimed to be self-luminous. The mistake is often committed, for the two are inseparable and in actual experience

* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 24. Yattvānubhūteḥ svayam prakāśatvam uktam tadviṣaya-prakāśanavelāyāṃ jñātuḥ ātmanaḥ tathaiva, na tu sarveṣām sarvadā tathaiveti niyamosti, parānubhavasya hānopādānādi liṅgakānumāna-jñāna-viṣayatvāt, svānubhavasyāpy atītasy ājñāsiṣam iti jñāna viṣayatvādarśanāt.

one is never found without the other. It is impossible to understand Rāmānuja's 'nor can it be said that consciousness by becoming an object of consciousness (as if it could) could no longer be conscious, for, from this it would follow that one's own past states, being objects of consciousness, are not themselves conscious.* It is clear here that by consciousness he understands only 'the objectified states or modes of consciousness', and this obviously cannot be equated with the awareness of these very states. We are here not concerned with a particular object of consciousness but rather with the consciousness itself which is aware of its particular modification. To say that consciousness is not a luminous entity, because it can later on become a past state or an object of consciousness is like saying, that the sun cannot be called luminous, because, it *was* shining, or is at present shining hidden by the wall (and hence known only by inference). Our past states are certainly not conscious in the sense of themselves being aware of themselves. Besides, it is not past states, or for the matter of that any state, that is ever conscious. It is always a conscious self or consciousness that is conscious. The reference, therefore, to the past states or to the contents of consciousness is in this connection fruitless.

According to Rāmānuja then, the only meaning of self-illuminacy of consciousness would be that, 'it shines forth or manifests itself through its own being, to its own substrate and at the present moment'; or 'again, that it is instrumental in proving its own object by its own being'. One may ask, what is the significance of 'at the present moment' here? Is it the suggestion that consciousness is not conscious when it is not conscious? But that would be a simple tautology like saying that the sun is shining when

* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 24. 'Svagatātītānubhavānāṃ paragatānubhavānāṃ ca anubhāvyatvenānanubhūtitva prasaṅgāt. Anubhūteranubhāvyatve ananubhūtitvam api duruktam'.

it is shining, and not shining when it is not shining. Does it then, mean that consciousness is not capable of illuminating itself to its own substrate in its essential and inherent nature? And then, it may well be asked, what other object is not in some way instrumental in proving its own object by its own being? Will that mean that other objects too, besides consciousness are self-luminous in an identical sense?

To Rāmānuja, there is no difference between consciousness as such and any other object in the universe. Consciousness is an object in a world of other objects and differs from other objects, not in any fundamental sense, but only as one object differs from another. To retain illuminacy for a while and also to deny it permanently in the manner of Rāmānuja, is to say the least, extremely unsatisfactory. His position is far less consistent or logical than that of the much-blamed Naiyāyikās in this matter. For, if consciousness shines forth only 'at the present moment' and can be an object of itself like any other object, it is, in fact, not at all different in essence from an object which is unconscious. When we remember that Rāmānuja does neither believe in the possibility of an 'aparokṣa jñāna', (immediate intuition) nor in the essential 'cit' nature of the Ātman, it becomes difficult to see how according to his theory, he can either avoid the infinite regress of cognitions, or save the Ātman from being reduced to the level of 'jaḍa' neither of which would be agreeable to Rāmānuja himself.

*Self-illuminacy and absolute immediacy of consciousness:*

The concept of self-illuminacy (svataḥprakāśatva) is closely related to the immediacy of consciousness (aparokṣatva). Immediacy is not the character of empirical thought or discursive reasoning. The doctrine of the denial of self-illuminacy to consciousness must inevitably lead to the denial of the doctrine of a transcendental, and immediately intuited unity of

consciousness. The doctrines of consciousness as 'Aparokṣa' and 'Svaprakāśa' must go hand in hand. We ordinarily make distinctions between being and knowing, or between an object and the knowledge of an object. But the transcendental or the 'Aparokṣa' consciousness is equally the ground of this distinction of subject and object, knowing and being as well. All distinctions are within the immediately intuited consciousness in which the distinctions of knowing and being merge. This peculiar character of consciousness in which to know is to be, and to exist is to be known, and where there is no intermediary between the knower and the known, the 'grāhaka' and the 'grāhya' may be called its "absolute immediacy". This is signified by describing the self as at once 'svaprakāśa' and 'aparokṣa'. Not only that this ultimate principle of revelation does not require another light for its own manifestation, but it is an absolutely immediate experience in which there is no distinction of subject and the object, the knower and the known. It has revelation in its own existence. It is immediately experienced though not known through the senses. *Anindriyagocaratve satyaparokṣatvāt*'.

The immediately intuited consciousness exists as a self-subsisting reality in which the distinctions of subject and the object or knowing and being merge. It exists as self-revealed even in the absence of any other object, much as the sun continues to shine even though there be no objects to be illuminated. Thus the 'svaprakāśa' is also 'Aparokṣa', for what is not dependent on anything else for its own manifestation, also exists without the mediation of anything else, for in reality there is nothing else excepting the self-effulgent Ātman.* To say, therefore, that consciousness is 'svaprakāśa' is the same as to say that it is 'aparokṣa'.

* *Bṛh.* 4.3.22.

It is true that ordinarily, consciousness appears to be a term signifying a relation of the knower and the known, but a little reflection would tell us that a consciousness of relation too is a relationless consciousness, which is grasped as an indivisible unity, all at once, like a flash of lighting. It is also true that the same object cannot be both the subject and the object, but what is stressed here is, that ultimately, consciousness need not be either a subject or an object and yet be itself, a complete and undifferentiable light.

*Self-Luminosity of Consciousness and Mysticism:*

The theory of self-luminosity of consciousness as maintained by the Idealist is held in order to vindicate the uniqueness of the nature of consciousness which is entirely unlike the nature of an unconscious object. Consciousness is like nothing else in the universe. It is only like itself, essentially self-effulgent. This 'Svayaṃ-jyotiḥ' character of consciousness is denied by the Realist who pulls down consciousness from the high pedestal of superiority given to it by the Idealist, and relegates it to a position of equality with other objects in the universe.

Now this idealistic theory of the self-luminosity and the absolute immediacy of consciousness is shared in common both by Idealism and Mysticism. Mysticism too, emphasises the intuitive nature of self-realization and the 'svataḥ-prakāśatva' of consciousness. But though on this point, Idealism and Mysticism are both opposed in common to Realism, it does not, therefore, follow that Idealism and Mysticism are necessarily one and the same. The foregoing considerations about the self-luminosity of consciousness are based upon an examination of the nature of knowledge and consciousness as involved in an act of cognition and should not necessarily imply an agreement with Mysticism on other points. But if by

Mysticism is also meant a distrust of the finality of discursive reasoning which always grasps Reality through the distinction of subject and object, and which always perpetuates the distinction between being and knowing, then the Idealistic theory of the 'Aparokṣa jñāna', is very near the mystic attitude of the immediate intuition of Reality. Idealism and Mysticism meet on the common point of the immediacy of conscious experience, and affirm the unity of being and knowing; but, while Mysticism does so by exalting *being*, Idealism achieves the same by exalting *knowledge*.

The view of the self-luminosity of consciousness is therefore, not necessarily mystic. It is here propounded as the basic epistemological presumption of all knowledge-situation.

*Consciousness is sui generis :*

The cognitive relation is unique and *sui generis*. It is called 'Svarūpasambandha'. It is defined as "the relation which must be held to exist in a case where determinate knowledge or judgment 'viśiṣṭa-jñāna' could not have been affected by another relation of 'Samavāya' or 'Sanyoga'.* "The effect of knowledge, as distinct from the act or the process of knowledge, is neither the physical object in itself, nor a merely mental state".† It is the essence or the 'svarūpa' or the '*what*' of the object known. It is quite different from other relations and is like itself only. It is not like the relation of time, space and causality. It is quite different from any other inter-objective or inter-subjective relation. The relation of knowledge should be regarded as foundational and we should not seek to represent what is foundational by the analogy of anything but itself.

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* *Nyāya Kośa*—Bhīmācārya.

† *Indian Philosophy*. Vol. II. p. 124.

*Udayana* holds that there is a 'svarūpasambandha' relation between a cognition and its object by virtue of which the former is a subject 'viṣayin' and the latter, an object 'viṣaya'. Between a cognition and its object, there is no intermediary reality in the form of 'Cognised-ness' (jñātatā) as supposed by Kumārilā. The natural relation between a cognition and its object by virtue of which the former apprehends the latter is called 'viṣayatā' or objectivity which constitutes the 'svarūpasambandha' between a cognition and its object.* *Haridāsa* also declares that a particular relation of 'svarūpasambandha' determines the relation of cogntion and its object.†

*Conclusion :*

The question of the self-illuminacy of consciousness is an important one for two main reasons. Firstly, because the alternative to the self-illuminacy of consciousness is the theory of a series of cognitions of a cognition, in which case, it is impossible to avoid the 'aniṣṭa' of an infinite regress, consciousness must be held to be not only other-manifesting, but as essentially self-manifesting. It should not stand in need of any other instrument, agency, or act to manifest itself. To reduce consciousness from a self-manifesting to a merely other-manifesting level, is to make knowledge or apprehension of an object impossible. It is its uniqueness as a self-revealing light that distinguishes it from anything else in the world, and also puts it above everything else in the 'democracy of things'.

Secondly, consciousness is something foundational. It is that to which all else is presented. It is in this sense, ultimate. It cannot itself be presented in like manner either to itself or to any other thing. It

* *Nyāya Kusumāñjali* with Haridāsa Tīkā. 4.2.3-4.

† "Ghaṭajñāna" ity atra ghaṭajñānayoḥ svarūpa eva sambandhaḥ".

cannot be divided into the distinctions of knower and known. It is 'Svayamsiddha' or self-established. It stands as an eternal witness and as the source and the essence of all manifestation, itself unmodified and ever shining in its own light, and grasped in an unitary and direct intuition.

The notion of consciousness as self-luminous is, therefore, a vital one for the Idealist, for, if, consciousness is not accepted as essentially self-luminous it must necessarily lead to a metaphysics of reality in which consciousness cannot have an ontologically independent and an epistemologically privileged status. Self-luminosity of consciousness means immediacy of consciousness. Immediacy means loss of distinction of subject and object, which further means a faith in a unitary, and undifferentiated consciousness which exists, and illumines itself, is 'svayaṃjyotiḥ' and is the principle of illumination in all experience and knowldge.

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## *CHAPTER V.*

# THE PSYCHOLOGICAL NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

*The contradictions of the problem:*

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the problem of self-consciousness with a view to understand the nature of consciousness and to see how various theories of self-consciousness lead to the conclusion of a unitary and a distinctionless consciousness. It is shown here that the problem of self-consciousness must necessarily involve the two difficulties of (1) an infinite regress in the cognitions of the self, and (2) an objectification of the subject. These difficulties are shown to be insurmountable in any theory of self-consciousness whether realistic or idealistic, strongly suggesting, that the problem of self-consciousness is a pseudo-problem and that the attempt to know the subject in the manner of an object is unsound. The true self is *ipso facto* self-conscious and revealed, and is yet not amenable to any division within itself of the cogniser and the cognised. The true self is not cognised as an object of knowledge, and the psychological self which is cognised, is not the true self. But as a substantial help to this understanding, we must guard ourselves against the confusions that have grown round the term, self-consciousness.

The term self-consciousness is ambiguously used almost indifferently in more than one sense and thus gives rise to unnecessary perplexities. It may for instance, be used either for consciousness of the self as an object given in introspection, i.e. for the empirical ego, the 'jīva' and the 'jñātā' who is alternately both a

subject of experience as well as an object of experience in an act of self-introspection; or, it may stand for the transcendental and the pure Subject-consciousness, which, though not known in an act of knowledge as an object, is yet known to exist as the ultimate subject and the pre-supposition involved in all knowledge. Similarly, consciousness too, may stand either for the ultimate metaphysical consciousness which is unchanging and eternal, or for the psychological and the changing consciousness which constantly appears and disappears. The former cannot be objectified, and the latter is not consciousness but only its content. It is absolutely necessary that we do not pass on, in the course of the discussion, from one meaning of the term to another as it actually happened with some philosophers.

*The Upaniṣads :*

The Upaniṣadic doctrine of the Ātman as the basic and the ultimate pre-supposition of all knowledge, and of the self as the Absolute Knower which would not be known as an object is indeed well known and so, according to the Upaniṣads, the self is devoid of attributes,* and hence cannot be perceived by 'Manas'.† It is beyond the categories of space, time, and causation which are applicable only to the phenomenal world. It is itself the knower of all things. How can the knower itself be known?‡ It cannot be comprehended by intellect, because it makes the intellect itself go.§ It is the Thinker but not Thought.|| It is the witness, the seer, and the knower.¶ Lastly, it is all-comprehending, 'Bhūmā'. In it there exist

* *Kaṭh.* 3-15.

† *Ken.* 1.5. *Kaṭha* 3.12. *Taitt.* 3.4.1.

‡ *Bṛh.* 2.4.14.

§ *Bṛh.* 3.4.2. "Na mater mantāram manvīthāḥ".

|| *Bṛh.* 3.8.11.

¶ *Praśna.* 6.5.

all relations.* It is beyond duality and distinctions. Thus by its very nature it cannot be an object of knowledge. Yet it is not unknown, for this 'Ātman' is knowable as the 'pratyagātman' apprehended by 'adhyātma yoga'† and can be realised by the pure in heart.‡ It can be realised by super-intellectual intuition, 'prajñā'.§ Thus, though unknowable in the usual way of knowledge as a 'prameya' it is yet realised through higher intuition.

*The Advaita view of Śankara :*

According to Śankara, there is only one reality of the Absolute and the universal consciousness which alone exists without any duality or distinction within or without it. All distinctions of knowledge into the knower and the known pertain to the realm of a secondary reality. The absolute consciousness is immediately intuited because it is self-luminous. It is called 'Brahmānubhava'. There is thus no self-consciousness in the sense similar to the consciousness of the ego. The Ātman cannot know itself even as fire cannot burn itself. It cannot become an object of knowledge.|| It is not an object of mental perception or intellectual apprehension.¶ It cannot be an object of perception because it cannot split itself into 'jñātṛ' and 'jñeya'.$ Yet it can be apprehended by higher intuition.£

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* *Ch.* 7.24.1,

† *Kaṭha.* 2.12.

‡ *Muṇḍaka.* 3.1.8.

§ *Kaṭha.* 2. 24. S.B.

|| *Bṛh.* 2.4.14. 'Na cāgneriva Ātmā Ātmano viṣayo na cāviṣaye jñānamupapadyate.

¶ *Bṛh.* 3.8.11.

$ *Taitt.* 2.1. 'Na hi niravayavasya yugapat jñeya jñātṛtvopapattiḥ'.

£ *S.B.* 3.2,24-28. 'Enam ātmānam nirasta-samastaprapañcam avyaktam samārādhanakāle paśyanti yoginaḥ'.

*Later Advaitists :*

*Vācaspati Miśra* holds the same view that the inner Ātmā is manifested only when limited in the condition of 'Jīva'.* It is the 'jñātr', 'kartr', and 'Bhoktr' as 'jīva', but as 'cidātmā' it is not an object of self-consciousness.†

*Govindānanda* holds that what is apprehended by self-consciousness is the active 'jīva'.‡

*Appayyadīkśita* holds that the jīva as determined by the mental modes is apprehended as the object of self-consciousness, and as determined by 'Ahaṅkāra' is apprehended as knowing subject. Thus there is no contradiction in the apprehension of the Ātman itself.§

*Padmapāda* raises the objection of contradiction in the apprehension of the Ātman by itself by drawing the fundamental distinction between the 'viṣayin' and the 'viṣaya'. The nature of an object is 'idam', of the Ātman is 'anidam', hence the Ātman can never know itself. It is the Ahaṅkāra which is the object of self-consciousness and not the true self.||

*Vidyāraṇya* also holds the same view and says that the Ātman is not possessed of the dual character of the 'jñātṛ' and 'jñeya' which the Ahaṅkāra has

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* *Bhāmatī* 1.1.1. 'Jīvo hi cidātmatayā svayam-prakāśatayā aviṣayopyopādhikena rupeṇa viṣaya iti bhāvaḥ.

† *Bhāmatī* 1.1.4. 'Ahampratyayaviṣayo yaḥ kartā kārya-karaṇa-saṅghāṭopahito jīvātmā tat sākṣitvena paramātmano' hampratyaya-viṣayatvasya pratyuktatvāt'.

‡ *R. Prabhā*. 2.3.38. 'Yo'hamadhigamyaḥ sa kartā sa eva jīvaḥ'.

§ *K.T.P.* 1.1.1. 'Aham sukhītyādyanubhavāt sukhādiviśiṣṭa-rūpeṇa karmatvam, antaḥkaraṇaviśiṣṭarūpeṇa kartṛtvam'. Page 39. N. S. Press, Bombay. 1915.

|| *Pañcapādikā*. 'Asmatpratyayatvābhimato 'haṁkāraḥ, sa ca idamanidamrūpa-vastugarbhaḥ sarvalokasākṣikaḥ.

and hence, it is only the Ahaṅkāra that is the object of self-consciousness.*

*Dharmarājādhvarīndra* too denies self-consciousness to the pure Ātman and says in the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, that in deep sleep, the Ātmā persists as the witness only, and *not* as the *knower*, because the Ahaṅkāra is then resolved at that time in the universal nescience. There is consciousness of the self only so long as there is Ahaṅkāra, and no longer.

*Citsukhā* holds that the Ātman is self-luminous without being an object of cognition.†

Thus according to Advaita Vedānta, consciousness is of two kinds (1) 'nirupādhika' and (2) 'sopādhika'. The first cannot have the character of an object, and is, 'nirāśraya', and 'nirviṣaya'. It is identical with being, 'sanmātra rūpa' to which 'jñātṛtva' does not belong. It belongs only to the (2) the sopādhika Ātman or the Ahaṅkāra which is a modification of Avidyā. True self-consciousness, therefore, is not the consciousness of the self as an object given in introspection; and neither introspection nor inference can establish the reality of the true self as a 'prameya' as supposed by the Nyāya philosophers, for the Ātman, in the light of which all the universe shines cannot itself be presented as an object. There would be the difficulty of the ultimate subject becoming an object if true self-consciousness was possible.

*The Sānkhya-Yoga :*

For an understanding of the problem of self-consciousness according to the dualistic position of Sānkhya-Yoga, it is necessary to understand how

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* *V.P.S.* p. 53. 'Yadyapyātmā niranśatvād aviṣayatvāccānśena vā svarūpeṇa vā nāsya jñānasya viṣayaḥ, tathāpyākāśapratibimbagarbhitadarpaṇa-vad ātmanyadhyastam antaḥkaraṇam ātmapratibimba-garbhitam ahampratyaya rūpeṇāvabhāsate'.

† *Citsukhī.* 'Akarmatvāccātmanaḥ svaprakāśatvam'.

ordinary perception takes place according to this theory. It is supposed that the transcendental 'Buddhi' goes out to the object through the channels of sense-organs and assumes the form of the object; but it cannot yet manifest the object as it is unconscious. It manifests the object to the self only when the reflection of the self is cast upon the unconscious 'Buddhi' modified in the form of an object. Thus the self knows an external object only through the mental modification on which it casts its reflection. This is the view of *Vācaspati Miśra* as expounded in his *Tattvavaiśāradī*.*

*Vijñānabhikṣū* thinks that there is also a mutual reflection of the self on the 'Buddhi', and of the reflected 'Buddhi' on the self, and that it is through this double reflection that the self comes to know the external object.†

Now if this be the procedure of the ordinary perception, then the question is, how can the Self be conscious of itself? It cannot directly know itself, much as we cannot see our own face. But we can infer it through its reflection, for the reflection must have an original. Thus what we know is not the true self and what is true self is not directly known.‡

Yoga thus holds that the self is always a knower, the witness, 'sākṣin', the seer, the spectator, (draṣṭṛ), so it can never turn back upon itself and be truly self-consciousness. But it can know itself through its reflection in the 'pure Sattva', unmixed with 'Rajas' and 'Tamas', by supernormal intuition 'pratibhā jñāna'. But it comes to this: that while the pure self can know the empirical self, the empirical self cannot know the pure self.

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**Y. B.* (1) 7., (2) 17.10., (4) 22.

† *Yoga Vārttikā* on 1.4. and 3.35. *S.P.B.* 1.87.

‡ "Na ca puruṣapratyayena buddhi sattvātmanā puruṣo dṛśyate, puruṣa eva pratyayam svātmāvalambanam paśyati" *Y.B.* 3.35.

There is thus a clear contradiction in the self being both the subject and the object and the theory of reflection in a dualistic metaphysics does not much improve the situation; for either there is in reality no consciousness of the self which is a spectator and a "kevalin", or there is the consciousness of an illusory and the reflected self. *Vācaspati* tries to avoid the contradiction by saying that, while the transcendental self is the *subject* of self-apprehension, the empirical self is the *object* of self-apprehension.* But this is virtually to maintain that the self is known only transcendentally as implied in all cognition as a subject and is never known as an object. Self-consciousness according to S.Y. should be impossible, for either the self illusorily identifies itself with the modifications of 'Buddhi' in a state of experience, in which it is not to be known in its purity and essential nature, or it is not identified with the modifications of 'Buddhi', in which case, there is no possibility of any experience or cognition whatever. Self-consciousness arises in the field of objective and empirical consciousness out of a confusion between the nature of the seer and the seen.† What is 'seen' is not of the nature of the 'seer', and what is of the nature of the 'seer' is not 'seen'. Let us ask if in self-apprehension, it is the 'Buddhi' which knows the self, or the self which knows itself? The first alternative is not possible, for 'Buddhi' is unconscious, the second would be self-contradictory. *Vijñāna-bhikṣu* who holds that the self can be known and yet avoid the contradiction of being both the knower and the known goes against the view of *Vyāsa* and *Vācaspati* who regard the pure self as the subject of apprehension only and never the object.‡ But his interpretation does not seem to be in keeping with the traditional Sānkhya-Yoga distinction of the 'Dṛśya' and 'Draṣṭṛ'.§

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* *T.V.* on 3.35.
† *Y.S.* 2.6. 'Dṛgdarśanaśaktyorekātmatevāsmitā'.
‡ Ātmākāravṛttyāvacchinnasya jñātṛtvāt kevalasya jñeyatvāt.
§ *Y.V.* on 3.35. 'Ātmākāravṛttyāvacchinnasya jñātṛtvāt kevalasya jñeyatvāt.

*The view of Prabhākara:*

According to Prabhākara, Samvit being 'Tripuṭī' in nature, the self is necessarily known in every act of cognition, for the self-luminous cognition manifests not only itself but it's support, the Ātman too, much as a flame manifests its own wick.* He does not accept any distinction between the Ātman and the Ahaṅkāra which are held by him to be identical.† According to him therefore, there is no occasion for a contradiction in the consciousness of the self by itself. For, whenever the self is known, it is known not as an object but as a subject necessarily revealed by the 'Tripuṭī samvit' in the revelation of an object. The self is to be known as a subject of cognition and not as an object.‡ This position of Prabhākara is rather new in as much as it neither accepts the realist view, that the self is known as an object, nor the Advaita view that it is self-revealed. It strikes a middle course by maintaining that the Self is known as a subject involved in cognition and revealed by it as such. But ultimately, it also fails to solve the difficulty of self-knowledge for, there can hardly be made any distinction between the self being known and being known as an object.

*Self-consciousness according to Nyāya Vaiśeṣika:*

According to N. Realism, self is not of the nature of self-illumination, and is apprehended either by means of perception or inference. The Naiyāyikās generally admit that the self is an object of inference, but some Naiyāyikās hold that it is an object of perception as well.

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* *V.P.S.* page 53. 'Ghaṭamaham jānāmi iti atra svaprakāśavijñānam ghaṭādīn viṣayatvena, ātmāṇam ca āśrayatvena sphorayati' and *V.P.S.* page 56. 'Kumbhamaham jānāmi ityādiṣu viṣaya samvedanasya svaprakāśasyāśrayatvena pradīpāśrayavartivat prakāśamāno, hamkāra ātmaiva'.

† *V.P.S.* p. 56.

‡ *Bṛhatī* p. 15. 'Samvittayā eva hi samvit samvedyā na samvedyatayā'.

While *Gautama* makes it an object of inference,* Vātsyāyana makes apparently conflicting statements. In one place he says, 'The self is not apprehended by perception, Ātmā tāvat pratyakṣato na gṛhyate.'† In another place he says, 'The self is an object of yogic perception'.‡ The two statements can be harmonised by saying that the self is not an object of ordinary perception, but is an object of supernormal perception.

*Udyotakara* holds that the self is an object of perception, because it is an object of 'Ahaṁpratyaya' which is of the nature of direct perception.§

*Jayanta* holds that the self cannot be established by perception, nor is it self-apprehended It is established by inference‖ and the qualities of pleasure, pain, etc. 'sukha' 'duḥkha' and 'jñāna' are the marks of this inference. And since these qualities cannot inhere in any other object except the self, we infer that self exists.

*The Vaiśeṣika view :*

*Kaṇāda* holds that self is not an object of normal perception but is an object of higher intuition, through a particular yogic conjunction.¶

*Śankara Miśra* holds that though the self as modified by its specific qualities is an object of internal perception, yet the pure self is an object of yogic perception only.$

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* *N.S.* 1.1.10.

† *N.B.* 1.1.9.

‡ *N.B.* 1.1.3. 'Pratyakṣam Yuñjānasya Yogasamādhijamātmamansoḥ samyogaviśeṣād-Ātmā pratyakṣa iti.'

§ Tad evam ahampratyaya viṣayatvād ātmā tāvat pratyakṣaḥ.

‖ *N.M.* p. 433. 'Na pratyakṣa ātmā nāpi svataḥ cetayatīti sthitaḥ'. Ātmano anumānagamyatvam. Also *N.M.* p. 431. 'Ātmā parokṣa iti siddham'.

¶ 'Tatrātmā manaścāpratyakṣe. *V.S.* 8.1.2.

$ *V.S.U.* 9.1.11. 'Ātmanyātmamanasoḥ saṅyogaviśeṣādātmāpratyakṣam'.

*Śrīdhara* also holds that while the empirical self is known through ordinary internal perception, the pure self is known only through yogic perception after constant meditation with undivided attention on the self, and after complete withdrawal of the senses from external objects.*

The realists deny the Advaita claim of the immediate intuition of the Ātman based upon its self-luminous nature and *Jayanta* offers the following important criticism of it in his *N.M*.

(1) The distinctionless transcendental consciousness is never experienced.

(2) Consciousness is not self-luminous because we are not conscious of other selves.

(3) Śankara's theory of 'Aparokṣa Jñāna' is self-contradictory because 'aparokṣa' also is a kind of perception. If the self manifests itself, it must be apprehended, and hence it is both the subject and the object.

(4) There is no other way of knowing the self than the knowledge of it as an object.†

Now, if the self is to be revealed only as an object, either of perception or of inference as claimed by Jayanta, we really forget the fundamental difference between the self as self, and the self as not-self. It is not sufficiently realized that if the self which is absolutely different from an object is reduced to the status of an object in introspection, it is also virtually reduced to the position of an unconscious object; for, an inability to become an object or to discard the character of the subject constitutes the very essence of the self. The self must ever remain as a subject without ever becoming an object. This is what we have called the second difficulty of the problem of self-consciousness, viz. 'the objectification of the self'.

* *N.K*. p. 196. 'Svābhāvikam tu yadasya rūpam....vahir indriyebhyo manaḥ....Ātmatatvam sphuṭībhavati'.

† *N.M*. p. 432.

*The Bhāṭṭa view :*

Kumārila seems to accept the view that the self is self-luminous,* but his follower *Pārthasārathi Miṣra* does not accept this view and holds that the self is an object of mental perception.† It is neither an object of inference as held by the Nyāya, nor of immediate intuition (Śankara), nor a subject of object-cognition as held by Prabhākara, but is an object of simple mental perception. To the Nyāya theory that self is an object of inference, Bhaṭṭa replies that if the self can be an object of inference, it can as well be an object of perception. The Nyāya might suggest that the self, being formless, could not be perceived, but the Bhāṭṭa retorts, that so is the feeling of pleasure formless, which according to Nyāya is an object of perception. There is no reason why the self cannot be perceived. Thus, there is no escape from the position that the self is an object of perception.

*Pārthasārathi* tries to avoid the contradiction in self-consciousness by saying that self is both a subject and an object in two different senses. It is subject as consciousness but object as a substance.‡

Bhaṭṭa attacks Śankara's theory of the self-illuminacy of consciousness on the basis of its loss in dreamless sleep. If the self were self-luminous, it would not lose its luminosity in dreamless sleep. And because it is not luminous, it must, then, be regarded as an object of internal perception.*

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* *S.V.* Ātmavāda 142. Ātmanaiva prakāśyo, 'yam ātmajyotir-itīritam.

† *S.D.* p. 347. 'Mānasa-pratyakṣarūp-āhampratyaya-gamyo jñātā. Also page 351, 349. 'Na viṣaya-vitti-kartṛtayā avabhāsaḥ, kintu mānas-aham-pratyaya-karmatayā avabhāsaḥ.

‡ *S.D.* p. 349-53.

* *S.D.* 352. 'Suṣuptau aprakāśāt nātmanaḥ svaprakāśatvam, ataḥ mānaspratyakṣa gamyaḥ'.

Thus there can be the following possible theories of consciousness of self :—

(1) Self is perceived by ordinary mental perception like any other object.

(2) It is known not by perception but by inference.

(3) It is known by a higher and super-normal perception.

(4) That it is perceived neither as an object, nor through inference, but, by reason of its self-luminosity, we have an immediate intuition of it.

All these theories can be brought under the two broad classifications of Realism and Idealism. The realistic attitude leans towards a theory of some kind of *perception* of the self, i.e. towards an objectification of it, normal or super-normal and towards a knowledge of it by inference. The Idealistic attitude, holding that the self is essentially incapable of becoming an object, leans towards the conclusion that it is answerable neither to perception, nor to inference but being self-luminous, is immediately intuited and is known as a presupposition of all cognitive activity.

To the Idealist, the self being the ultimate basis of all knowledge, it is as impossible to perceive it as to mount one's own shoulder. That, however, does not mean that it is unmanifested, for the alternative to the self-illumination of the self must be the unconsciousness of the self which would be absurd. The realistic account of self-consciousness leads us into the difficulties of infinite regress. If the self is perceived, it must be perceived as an object, to which must be posited a perceiver, which also must in turn be made an object of perception and so on *ad infinitum*, with the result that the ultimate self is left unperceived. This is the first difficulty. But there is a second and a more objectionable difficulty.

In the process of self-consciousness, the self, whose nature as a subject is sharply distinguished from an object, is known not as a subject—as is its true nature, but has to be known as an object, i.e. as is not its true character. Self-consciousness, therefore, forfeits its purpose of revealing the self as a subject. The ultimate subject either remains unknown or is known in a character which does not belong to it.

If the realistic account of self-consciousness must inevitably lead to these difficulties, a way out of it must be found in the self-luminosity and the immediate apprehension of the self. But while the Realistic attitude towards self-consciousness has the danger of degrading the unique status of the self-luminous self to the level of an unconscious object, the Idealistic attitude of emphasis upon its basic character and transcendental nature has the risk of the Self's being lost or altogether denied as actually happened with the Mādhyamika Buddhist. There is a sense in which both the Realist and the Idealist deny the reality of self and consciousness and come very near the Mādhyamika position. The realist denies the self by making it essentially unconscious and by imposing upon it in the process of self-consciousness the status of an object. He denies the self-subsisting reality of consciousness by making it a temporary phase of an accidental conjunction of circumstances which does not fully explain knowledge and experience. The idealist, on the other hand, denies* the self or consciousness by insisting upon its transcendental, unchanging and distinctionless nature, and by insisting upon its incomprehensibility to empirical sources with which alone we are familiar in the practical world.

The difficulty of the Realist position is due to the fact that he does not take his stand on the self-revealing and independent nature of consciousness or

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* He does not altogether deny it, but only rationalistically. And therefore it is held that the instruction about the true nature of the Ātman should be taken on authority.

self. The difficulty of the Idealist, however, is that he cannot *empirically* establish the difficult fact of self-knowledge. A solution of the difficulties is, therefore, sought to be found in the Advaita recognition of the two orders of consciousness.

*The Two Realms :*

The Idealist makes amends for his theory of transcendental consciousness by his hypothesis of the two orders of being and a dual realm of reality, the 'Pāramārthika' and the 'Vyāvahārika'. He affirms the reality of the phenomenal self and the changing consciousness, but relegates it to a lower or a practical realm and what he affirms of the 'Pāramārthika' realm, he takes away from the 'Vyāvahārika'. This is nothing special. All true theories of consciousness have to provide, at some stage, for both the transcendental and the phenomenal aspects of consciousness. According to Śankara, the key to the understanding of the problems of consciousness lies in the understanding of its 'Pāramārthika' and the 'Vyāvahārika' aspects. We have self-consciousness in the 'Vyāvahārika realm, in which we *do* perceive the self, but it is a self which is not the true self. It is only the self as conditioned and qualified by the internal organs. We do *not* have self-consciousness in the 'Pāramārthika' realm, in which the true self exists as the only reality, as 'no other', as the objectless subject, and as the substrate and the basis of the distinctions of the known and the knower, and not as either the knower or the known. 'The fiction of independent individualism, the belief in the Ahaṅkāra and the fiction of isolation must be discarded in the way for salvation'.*

*An examination of Rāmānuja's criticism of ego-less consciousness :*

According to Rāmānuja, self-consciousness is an essential and inseparable feature of consciousness.

* 'Some basic principles of Indian Philosophy'. *B. Heimann*

Self is a conscious subject which never loses its self-hood* 'Ahaṁpratyaya'. The Ahaṁpratyaya is present even in deep sleep though in a dim degree.† This theory of the eternal presence of the self-consciousness comes in conflict with Śankara's theory of the eternal presence, not of a consciousness of self-hood which is an illusory superimposition, but of a self-less and distinctionless presence of consciousness and Rāmānuja offers the following criticism of it.

Rāmānuja's first criticism against ego-less consciousness is, that egoity is not something illusorily superimposed on the self; for if that were so, there would be such a consciousness as 'I am consciousness', and not as we have in our daily life, 'I am conscious'.‡ This should clearly prove that self is a subject of consciousness. The one and unitary consciousness cannot be divided into two parts of 'I'-ness and 'consciousness', the one being held illusory and the other as the only reality. But this criticism of Rāmānuja is both true as well as irrelevant. If there is an empirical consciousness, it invariably involves the duality of subject and object and the upholders of the distinctionless consciousness never deny this phenomenal aspect of consciousness which must necessarily be in the form of 'I am conscious', and cannot possibly be in the form of 'I am consciousness' which would be meaningless. It is admitted on all hands that empirical knowledge revels in the distinctions of the knower, the known, and knowledge. What is affirmed is that this distinction is not final and ultimate.§ On the other hand, if by consciousness is meant the pure duality-less consciousness it could not possibly be in the form of 'I am consciousness', for the 'I'-ness is as unnecessary to it as 'this-ness'. It can be only

* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 29. 'Ahaṁpratyaya siddho hi asmadarthaḥ'.

† *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 35. 'Suṣuptāvāpi nāham bhāva vigamaḥ'.

‡ *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 31.' Anubhūtiraham iti pratīyeta, na anubhavāmi aham iti pratītiḥ'.

§ *S.B.* 1.1.4. 'Avidyā kalpitam vedya-veditṛ-vedanā bhedam'.

in one form and that is subject-less objectless consciousness. The witnessing self which is 'Sākṣī', 'Kevala', and 'Nirguṇa' cannot be identified with the jīva' which is actually undergoing the modifications of experience.* But Rāmānuja could never see the need of just such a consciousness. To him, consciousness or the self could never be without egoity. He asks, 'Do you mean to say that knowledge appears to itself? The Self is not mere knowledge but the subject of it'. And the general principle is that whatever appears to itself appears as an 'I', and therefore, even granting that consciousness appears to itself, it will appear in the form of 'I'. Hence 'what constitutes the inward self is not pure consciousness but the 'I'.†

Rāmānuja's second criticism of 'Śankara's disitnction of self and egoity is an attack upon the belief that the unconscious 'Antaḥkaraṇa' can come to possess the character of a knower. Śankara held that since egoity or the character of a knower involves action and consequently change, it could not belong to the unchanging consciousness. Action and change must be the property of limited consciousness and hence the qualities of 'Kartṛ' or agent, and 'Jñātṛ' or knower must belong to the ego or the 'jīva', the lower principle of consciousness.‡ But to Rāmānuja it is manifestly absurd that the non-intelligent 'Ahaṅkāra' or the 'Antaḥkaraṇa' could become a knower.§ The agency of knowledge cannot belong to the unconscious Ahaṅkāra. Nor can Śankara's theory of egoity as a reflection of the Pure Self be tenable. 'How, we ask, is this becoming a reflection of intelligence imagined

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* *Pañcadaśī*. X. 11-ff. Nṛtyaśālāsthito dīpah prabhum sabhyānśca nartakīm, dīpayed aviśeṣena tadābhāve' pi dīpyate.

† *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 35. 'Ahamartha eva pratyagātmā na jñapti mātram'.

‡ *S.B.* 2.3.40.

§ *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 32. 'Na jñātṛtvamahaṁkārasya' na kadācidapi jaḍasyāhankārasya jñātṛtva sambhavaḥ'.

to take place?' Does consciousness become a reflection of 'Ahaṅkāra' or does Ahaṅkāra become a reflection of consciousness? The former alternative is inadmissible since the quality of being a knower would not be allowed to consciousness; and so is the latter, for the non-intelligent can never become a knower.*

The Advaita reply to the above is that the unconscious Ahaṅkāra manifests the consciousness even as the hand manifests the light of the sun. But Rāmānuja retorts that, to say that the non-intelligent Ahaṅkāra should manifest the self-luminous self has no more sense than to say that a spent coal manifests the sun.† The relation of manifestation cannot at all hold good between two contradictory natures of consciousness and 'Ahaṅkāra', The Advaita illustration of the hand and the sunbeam is untrue, for 'in reality the sunbeam is not manifested by the hand at all'.‡

Moreover, the concept of a knower does not involve a concept of change. Rāmānuja denies the fundamental tenet of Śankara that to be a knower is to be changing and hence different from the unchanging consciousness. The ego as a subject of knowledge is not necessarily an active and changing principle. 'Nor can it be maintained that to be a knower is something essentially changing'.§

According to Rāmānuja, the Ātman is eternal, and its natural quality of consciousness too is eternal. But it is yet consciousness subject to contraction and expansion, which are due to the accidents of the 'Karma'

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* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 32. 'Kimahaṅkārachāyāpattiḥ samvidah, ut -asamvicchāyāpattir-ahaṅkārasya'.

† Śāntāngāra ivādityam ahamkāro yadātmakaḥ, svayamjyotiṣam ātmānam vyanaktīti na yuktimat'. Quoted by R. N. in 1.1.1.

‡ *R.B.* p. 32.

§ *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 32. 'na ca jñātṛtvam vikryātmakam, jñātṛtvam hi jñāna guṇāśrayatvam jñānam cāsya nityasya svābhāvikadharmatvena nityam'.

of the person in the cycles of existence, it is not the natural property of the self. 'The quality of an agent is not, however, essential to the self, but originated by 'Karma', the self is essentially unchanging'.* It is difficult to see here any difference at all between the position of Śankara and his critic Rāmānuja when both virtually believe in the eternity of the self as well as of consciousness, but attribute change and action either to the unconscious 'Ahaṅkāra' or to the mere 'accidents of Karma'. In fact, Rāmānuja's two above quoted remarks, (1) 'Nor can it be maintained that to be knower is to be essentially changing', and (2) 'It is subject to contraction and expansion due to accidents of Karma, and the quality of an agent is not essential to the self but is originated by 'Karma'," are identical which are meant by him to be different. If the self is admitted to be 'essentially unchanging', it matters little whether the character of change and egoity (knowership) is 'due to the Antaḥkaraṇa or 'to the accidents of Karma'. The relevance of the argument consists in the recognition of two orders of consciousness, one of the status of the unchanging and egoless, and the other of egoity and action which Rāmānuja too is virtually forced to admit.

Rāmānuja next criticises Śankara's notion of a 'Sākṣī-conscious-ness', a form in which the egoless consciousness is supposed to exist in deep sleep. To Rāmānuja, 'Sākṣī' and 'ego' are identical concepts. He asks 'what is the meaning of a 'Sākṣin'? By a 'Sākṣin' is meant some one 'who knows about something by personal observation', and one who does not know an object cannot be called a Sākṣin'.† Mere

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* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 32.

(a) 'Svayam aparicchinnam eva jñānam sañkoca vikāsārham ityupapādayiṣyāmaḥ'.

(b) Tacca na svābhāvikam apitu karmakṛtam ityavikṛiya svarūpa evātmā'.

† *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 36. 'Sākṣitvam ca sākṣāt jñātṛtvam eva, na hi ajānataḥ sākṣitvam, jñātā eva sākṣī na jñāna mātram'.

consciousness cannot be regarded as 'Sākṣin'. Now, though to be a Sākṣin is not to be devoid of knowledge yet there seems to be clear difference between the two concepts of an indifferent and unaffected witness, and the actual participator and the affected 'Bhoktā' or the Jīva'. There is at least as much difference between a 'Sākṣī' and a Jīva as between an umpire and a player in a game of football. The Sākṣī knows but is not an actual and active participator, and hence is not affected by the vicissitudes of the game. The concept of a Sākṣī-conciousness is necessitated by the need of a self-same consciousness in the midst of its changing modes 'vṛttis' which are the actual and active agents.* The active modes of consciousness and the quickly successive phases of ego-hood cannot themselves explain the conscious phenomenon without the assumption of a Sākṣī-consciousness behind them.

Rāmānuja, while justifiably rooted in the concrete aspects of consciousness, unjustifiably overlooks the unempirical background of his empirical super-structure, as most on-lookers in a game notice only the winning and the losing player and not the unaffected umpire.

Besides, if there is no difference between a 'Sākṣī' and a 'Jīva' and if a 'Sākṣī' must always have an 'other' to look on, then this permanent state of the duality of the knower and the known would make omniscience 'Sarvajñatā' or the state of all knowledge impossible. The imperfect knower 'jīva' must at sometime so completely know everything that there is no 'other' left outside itself and then he is called not a 'jīva' but a 'Sākṣī'.

*Ego-less consciousness and deep sleep :*

A study of deep sleep provides a fruitful background for a theory of the true nature of consciousness

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* *Pañcadaśī* 10.9-19.

as a distinctionless eternal presence. Such an eternal consciousness as exists in deep sleep or in the fourth state 'Turīya' is consciousness but not self-consciousness, because there are no objects in the dreamless sleep in opposition to which there may arise the ego consciousness, 'Ahampratyaya'. Self-consciousness is the consciousness of the self as mediated through the consciousness of objects as is the case in the waking and the dream state. But since this mediation is not possible where there are no objects, there is consequently no self-consciousness in dreamless sleep in place of which there is only a distinctionless or a 'nirviṣaya' and 'cinmātra' presence. And conversely, where there *is* a mediation through the presence of objects as in waking and dream states, there is also the presence of the differentiated consciousness in the form of the 'Jīva' which revels in the distinctions of the 'Aham' and 'Idam'. But there is then, no manifestation of the '*nirāśraya*' and the *nirviṣaya* 'jñāpti mātra cit prakāśa', which also, is nevertheless present as the basic substrate.

Rāmānuja says that the 'I—consciousness' is not very clear in deep sleep for lack of external objects.* He, therefore, accepts the main principle that consciousness is due to the mediation of external objects, and that ego-consciousness is the one extreme of the polarity of consciousness of which the object-consciousness is the other extreme. So that where there is no possibility of this mediation, there is no self-consciousness. The question, therefore, is whether in deep sleep there is unmediated consciousness or a mediated consciousness.

Rāmānuja accepts that there are no objects in deep sleep and hence no possibility of any mediation.

* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 35. 'tamoguṇābhibhavāt parāgarthānubhavābhāvāccāhamarthasya vivikta-sphuṭa-pratībhāsābhāve apyaprabodhādaham-ityekākāreṇa ātmanaḥ sphuraṇāt suṣuptāvapi nāham bhāva vigamaḥ'.

The only alternative left therefore is either to deny the presence of consciousness and thus to affirm a break in the continuity of consciousness, or to admit the existence of an eternal consciousness, unmediated by external objects. Ego-consciousness must exist only in polarity with object—consciousness. It must go in the absence of its objects. Rāmānuja cannot retain the one without retaining the other also. He destroys the object-consciousness but wants to retain the ego-consciousness. In deep sleep, either there is self-less consciousness or there is a lapse of consciousness. Since the latter alternative is not acceptable, the former alone is in keeping with the doctrine of the polarity of subject-object consciousness. This self-less consciousness is not either a psychological self or a particular consciousness, but a consciousness presupposed by all empirical and particular fluctuations of consciousness and which itself cannot be apprehended as an object. Rāmānuja's theory upholding ego-consciousness in sleep in the absence of object-consciousness is beset with another difficulty, viz, of the admission of degrees of consciousness which is not consistent with the notion of its eternality. Rāmānuja, for instance, says that though the distinction of 'I—ness' is a permanent feature of our consciousness, it yet fades and grows dim though it never ceases to exist. This would lead to the admission of degrees of clearness and faintness of the 'I-consciousness' which would lead to the theory of perpetual modification of consciousness into infinite shades of distinctions, and would therefore destroy the concept of it as an unchangeable principle. If the 'I-consciousness' expands and contracts as he maintains, there is no reason why it should not meet the minimum of contraction viz, extinction and the maximum of expansion, viz, Absolute I-less consciousness both of which are unpleasant alternatives to Rāmānuja.

That the seeming appearance of unconsciousness in deep sleep is due to the absence of objects and

not to the absence of consciousness, is almost generally acknowledged.* There is, therefore, no inconsistency in accepting consciousness as the essence of self, and yet postulating a self in deep sleep which is unconscious of anything; for the self, during deep sleep *does* see, 'though it appears to see nothing'.† The self in such a state is like the sun which consists essentially in *revelation or brightness*, and is not thought of as the revealer. Wherever there are objects distinct from it, they get illuminised, while, when there are no objects, it shines in its own light. ‡

The self in deep sleep is called the seer only on account of its essential permanent sight. If this sight had been a mere activity or a mere accidental property of it, then, of course, it would lead to its occasional lapse into unconsciousness. But not the sight which is its very essence. Such basic consciousness must exist uninterruptedly but not the self-consciousness whose existence is conditional and depends upon the presence of objects and the consequent modifications of 'citta vṛttis'. Hence, in the absence of these conditions, the self is in a state of unity with its real nature. It has no more any specific type of knowledge and has no consciousness of outer or inner, of the 'other' or 'himself', just as a man loses all such specific consciousness when embraced by his beloved.

The question is often put in Western Philosophy that 'If the soul is a principle of consciousness, what would remain of consciousness if the necessary paraphernalia of the material body of the senses (external

* *S.B.* 2.3.18. 'Viṣayābhāvāḍ iyam acetayamānatā na caitanyābhāvāt'.

† *Bṛh.* 4.3.23. (Paśyan vai na paśyati).

‡ *Bṛih.* 4.3.23. "Ādityādayo nityaprakāśasvabhāvā eva santaḥ svābhāvikena nityenaiva prakāśena prakāśayanti, na hi...... aprakāśatmānaḥ santaḥ prakāśam kurvantaḥ prakāśayanti iti ucyante" *Ś. B.*

and internal) is taken away'? The answer to the above is provided by the distinction made between rational thinking and self-illumination; in the latter, all empirical thinking is set aside and only the pure *spiritual* '*Svarūpa*' of the self remains without any differentiation or modification. The view is supported by Yoga-Sūtrās* where the nature of 'Asamprajñāta samādhi' is expounded as a *consciousless consciousness*, and the Puruṣa exists as 'Bodhasvarūpa' or 'Svarūpamātra eva'. The phenomenal and noumenal consciousness differ in kind, the former implying the three factors of, grāhya, grahaṇa, and grahītr, a trinity, which the noumenal knowledge wholly transcends.†

Thus, the hypothesis of eternal consciousness is reconciled with the apparent gaps of unconsciousness, because, it is the *self-consciousness* which is absent during the gaps, and not the *eternal consciousness* which never sleeps. The mediated consciousness which is conditioned by the presence of objects is in turn conditioned by the *eternal consciousness* which is not conditioned at all. The consciousness of distinctions is not a permanent feature of our spirit and the mediated consciousness is not the only form in which consciousness exists. All distinctions presuppose an undivided and unchanging consciousness, which cannot, however, be experienced during our waking or dream states. It is necessary, therefore, to postulate consciousness in deep sleep and an explanation of its apparent gaps must be found in the absence of mediated self-consciousness and not in the absence of consciousness itself, i.e. consciousness exists even when there is no consciousness either of objects or of the subject. It exists, not as a self-conscious self or as conscious of some particular object, but as mere "sciousness". It is this theory of the self-consciousless consciousness of

* *Y.S.* (1) 18.50.51. (2) 27.20. (3) 50. (4) 35.34.

† *Y.S.* (1) 42-51. (2) 20.25. (3) 47.50.49. (4) 34.

Yajñavalkya which is here desired to be upheld by showing, that all attempts to maintain a consciousness of distinctions into self and not-self as an eternal feature of our life lead to unresolved contradictions.

This Hindu concept of objectless and subjectless eternal awareness as either 'atyanta vivikta', pure, 'kevala' or as 'Puruṣa', and 'cinmātra' is more consistent as an explanation of deep sleep and other riddles of self-consciousness than the modern theories of Idealistic thought which accept the concept of eternal consciousness and yet reject the notion of contentless consciousness. The modern idealist would rather accept self-consciousness in deep sleep than an objectless and contentless consciousness. But what is forgotten is the fact, that even the consciousness of distinctions and relations must presuppose a distinctionless and relationless consciousness as the very basis of these distinctions and relations.

*The Conclusion :*

The foregoing study of the problems of self-consciousness from the various orthodox systems of Hindu thought has been made to show that, firstly :

(1) Self-consciousness does not belong to the realm of Pure consciousness, and the question of self-consciousness does not arise if by consciousness is to be understood the foundational and the pure *sciousness*, free from all limiting adjuncts and without distinctions of 'I' and 'not-I'.

(2) Secondly, that no matter to what system of thought we owe allegiance, no sooner do we descend to the lower concept of a practical and 'vyāvahārika' realm than we have to provide for a subject-object distinction in consciousness, and thus have to make room for a theory of self-consciousness. The question as to how exactly the self is perceived, by inference as held by Nyāya, or by immediate intuition 'Prati-

bhājñāna' as held by the Vedānta and the Sāṅkhya-Yoga, or by ordinary internal perception as held by Kumārila, or again by perception as subject (Prabhākara), is of little significance in itself apart from showing that it is never the consciousness as such, but a modification or a condition of it which is apprehended as the self, the ego or the 'I'. This throws an important light on the nature of consciousness as in itself one, pure and indivisible.

(3) It has also been shown that in every case of a consciousness of self, there occurs (a) an infinite regress of selves and (b) an objectification of the self which does violence to the nature of the subject as subject. Both these alternatives of either infinite regress or an objectification of the subject are inadmissible though necessarily involved in self-consciousness. These contradictions can be removed only by postulating a higher self-less consciousness in which alone they can be resolved.

There is a need, therefore, of clearly recognising two aspects of consciousness, the transcendental and the empirical. The contradictions and the perplexities of the latter are resolved in the former. On this recognition is based the Advaita distinction of the Ātman and the Jīva. The Ātman is the eternal light of consciousness. The Jīva is the eternal consciousness as limited by the organism, i.e. the sense-organ, the "Manas" and the "Antaḥkaraṇa". The Ātman is the presupposition and the basis of all experience. The Jīva can be the subject and the object both. The Ātman is never the object of consciousness. It becomes an object of consciousness when it loses its purity and is determined by its limiting adjuncts. The Ātman as the inner self is apprehended by immediate intuition.*

* *S.B.* Introduction. p. 10. A.S.S. 'Na tāvadayamekāntenāviṣayo, asmat pratyayāviṣayatvāt, aparokṣatvācca pratyagātmā prasiddaḥ'.

(4) Another important consequence of the principle of the contentless and foundational consciousness would be the concept of an actionless self, for to be a 'jñātā' implies the activity ( kriyā ) of grahaṇa or knowledge. There can be no activity in the Absolute.

Idealistic thought, following the method of an *a priori* deduction of the necessary presuppositions of knowledge, almost inevitably comes to the concept of an absolutely unchanging, inactive, and self-same static consciousness as the ground and the basis of change and development. Nothing, therefore, that grows and changes is truly real. Reality or the 'Satya' becomes identical with the unmodifiably "nitya and the 'avikriya'." The realistic thought on the contrary, in its reluctance to exceed beyond what is strictly warranted only by our observations of the facts within empirical knowledge and experience, necessarily arrives at a concept of evolution, activity and dynamism as a more fundamental and a truer feature of reality. Starting from these opposite viewpoints, the divergence in their conclusions is not surprising, for, to the Realist, the supposed and the transcendentally existing reality of the Idealist which does not either *become* something or modify itself but stands isolated, remains not only empirically unknown but also pragmatically inconsequential.

It is significant, however, to find, that in this idealistic conclusion of the concept of a static consciousness or the 'Avikriya cinmātrā' as the supreme Reality, and in relegating the role of change and dynamism to a lower principle of reality, the non-dualistic view of Śankara, and the dualistic view of the Sāṅkhya-Yoga both meet and agree in as much as, change and activity belong only to the 'jīva' or 'Avidyā' in the former, and to the unconscious Prakṛti in the latter. In Vedānta, the true self is free from it, and in the Sāṅkhya-Yoga the Puruṣa.

## *CHAPTER VI.*

## THE TRANSCENDENTAL NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

*Introduction :*

We saw in the last chapter that the problem of self-consciousness led us to the presupposition of a selfless transcendental consciousness. A satisfactory theory of knowledge must make room for two kinds of consciousness and two distinct principles one of which undergoes modifications, while the other remains unchanging and unmodified. The former may be called 'Antaḥkaraṇa', 'Citta' or 'Buddhi', & the latter 'cit' or 'Bodha'. The mental modifications & the 'Antaḥkaraṇa' vṛttis do not by themselves constitute knowledge because left to themselves they are unconscious. It is only when the light of the consciousness or the 'cit' (which is other than the modes) holds them together and illumines them that a knowledge of an object arises. The distinction between 'Antaḥkaraṇa' and 'cit', the unconscious changing principle and the conscious unchanging principle is so fundamental that it must inevitably form part of any metaphysics of consciousness.

The Yoga Bhāṣya gives three reasons for the recognition of this difference between mind and the self.* The mind is different from the self, firstly, because the former undergoes modifications and is active while the latter is not; secondly, because the mind serves the purpose of the 'cit' for whom it is an object while the transcendental Puruṣa has no ends to serve; and lastly, because the mind takes the form of 'Sattva', 'Rajas' and 'Tamas', while the self is free and does not take upon itself the quality of any one of these

* *Yoga Bhāṣya* 2. 20.

constituents.* This transcendental consciousness exists as a 'Sākṣī', 'Kevala' and 'Akartā',† and does not enter into mutations, is different from its other counterpart, the 'Buddhi', and exists as the pure subject incapable of being reduced to a status which constantly enters into mutations in the forms of the modifications of the 'citta'. Thus, the pure self is different from an empirical knowledge-event because the former knows the latter.‡

This distinction of consciousness into one unchanging in the midst of change, and the other, changing and varying according to its moulds and contents has been a bone of contention and a source of much confusion among philosophers. The Realists, like Kaṇāda, Śrīdhara and Jayanta, and even the Idealists like Rāmānuja, starting from the solid ground of daily experience, find a changing and quickly succeeding consciouness, full of varying contents, itself a result of a juxtaposition of circumstances, involving an inevitable reference to an object and a subject, as the only visible nature of consciousness. And though the Realist is forced to provide for a constantly present and unchanging principle of recollection and personal identity in order to build up a consistent series of experience ; he, yet sees nothing beyond the empirically verifiable facts of changing consciousness, and thus feels compelled to deny the "ghost" of the transcendental consciousness. But to the Idealist thinkers of the Upaniṣads, the 'Advaita' Vedānta, and the S.Y. it is the very back-bone and the basis of all experience without which no knowledge even of the fragmentary type would be possible. It is, therefore, useful to know what exactly are the

* *Y.B.* 2.20. 'Pariṇāminī hi buddhih, siddham puruṣasya apriṇāmitvam, parārtha buddih svārthaḥ puruṣaḥ, triguṇā buddhiḥ, guṇānām upadraṣṭā puruṣaḥ'.

† *S.K.* 19. 'Siddham sākṣitvamasya puruṣasya, kaivalyam, mādhyasthyam, draṣṭṛtvam, akartṛbhāvaśca'.

‡ *Y.S.* 4.18. 'Sadājñātāścitta vṛttayaḥ'.

implications of a theory of transcendental consciousness and how much is exactly meant by this assumption.

An additional interest attaches to this study of the transcendental nature of consciousness because the characteristic Hindu Thought has laid a special emphasis on the transcendental nature of our being. It has carried it to its farthest consequence in its belief in a psychical entity entirely dissociated from all experience as the truest reality.

*The transcendental consciousness is eternal and all pervading:*

By transcendental consciousness is meant a consciousness which does not change in time, is unchanging, permanent, and in fact beyond the category of time. It is not in time, for time is in it. The category of time itself is due to consciousness without which no time can be imagined. There was never a time when consciousness did not exist, nor will there be a time when it will cease to exist. The antecedent non-existence or the consequent absence of the present consciousness cannot be established without tacitly assuming the presence of that very consciousness which is desired to be denied at some point of time. It stands immutable, 'Kūṭastha', as an unceasing reality and stays as a permanent spectator beholding all changes, himself unchanging.*

It is unmodified because it is the witness of all modifications.† The concept of eternality means existence in all the three divisions of time. 'Sarva kāla vartamānam'.

It is 'sarvagata' and 'vibhū' like 'Ākāśa'. It is unintermittent. It is infinite or 'Bhūman'. It is unlimited for there is nothing to limit it. Just as

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*_Bṛih._ 4.4.16-17., C.U. 5.3., _Kaṭha_ 2.14. 3.15. 2.22. _Y.S._ 4.18.21. etc.

† _Pañca-Śikhā Sūtra_ in Y.B. 2.18.

temporally, there is no time when Consciousness is not, similarly spatially, there is no place where it is not. In fact, considerations of it in terms of time and space are meant only to aid our understanding of its supra-temporal and supra-spatial nature. Transcendental consciousness could not be considered in terms of time and space. It is timeless and spaceless. Spatial and temporal distinctions are themselves distinctions within it and not of it. It is *hysteron proteron* to think of transcendental consciousness spatio-temporally.* The Upaniṣads say that since there is nothing but intelligence at the time of origin, continuation and dissolution, therefore "intelligence is All".†

*It is uncaused:*

Transcendental consciousness is uncaused because there is nothing else beside it which could precede it. It has nothing 'before' it. It is therefore 'aja'. And since there is nothing else excepting itself, it follows that it is not only uncaused but also uncausing. It is free from all the limitations of time, space and causation which have a meaning only as functioning within it.‡

The Brahman is without cause or without effect and can never itself become either the cause or the effect of anything. The category of causation cannot be applied to the Ātman for, from the standpoint of the ultimate existence, there could be no such thing as an *act* of creation. Absolute non-production of it 'Ajāti' should be the only truth. If the ultimate reality is perfect in itself, and self-satisfied-'āptakāma', then an act of creation can never be predicated of it. From the transcendental view point, creation does not exist, that we see it is due to our limitation of the view-point. The empirical reality of the illusion

* *S.B. Bṛh.* 3.8.7., 4.4.20., 2.4.6-f. *CH. Up.* 7.25.2., 3.14.

† *Ait. Up.* 5-3.

‡ *S.B. G.K.* 4.14, 20, 40. *Bṛh.* 3.8., 4.4.20., 5.19. *Kaṭha* 2.14.18. *Ch. Up.* 6.1.3. Iśa. 4.5.9.10.12.

of creation does not exist from the standpoint of the Absolute reality. The hypothesis of creation is only an explanation given by those and for those who must hold creation to be a fact, because they have not yet seen the highest truth which is above creation.

According to Gauḍapāda, there is no becoming or evolution either of the Ātman or of anything else from it, for the explanations of creation either as (a) 'Bhogārtham', or as (b) 'Krīḍārtham', turn out to be logically unsatisfactory.*

Creation cannot be understood except as illusion. The Absolute consciousness is, therefore, uncaused and uncausing.

*It is an undifferentiated and distinctionless unity:*

The Absolute consciousness has neither external relations nor internal differentiations. It has nothing of a like kind 'sajātīya', or of a different kind 'vijātīya' and it has no internal variety 'svagata bheda' either. A tree has an internal variety of foliage, flowers and fruit, it has a relation of similarity to other trees and of dissimilarity to objects of different kinds like stones. But the Absolute consciousness has no other thing which is similar or dissimilar to it, and it has no internal differentiation.† It is 'nirviṣaya' and 'Nirāśraya'. It is, therefore, quite distinctionless and undifferentiated. All differences and distinctions of consciousness belong to the empirical and the conditioned manifestation of it, and are due to the differences in the conditions and 'Upādhīs'. The true self is free from them.

Ordinarily, empirical consciousness implies, a relation of 'of' and 'for'. Consciousness is consciousness 'of' something and 'for' somebody, but no such

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* *G. Kārikā* 9.

† *Pañcadaśī* II. 20-21. 'tathā sadvastunaḥ bhedātrayaṃ nivāryate'.

differentiation is possible in absolute consciousness. There is in it not even ego-consciousness or cognition of 'Ahampratyaya', for it is just a mass of undifferentiated consciousness. It is nevertheless of the nature of consciousness 'jñasvarūpa' and not unconsciousness, 'Jaḍavat'.* All differentiations and distinctions brought into the Absolute consciousness are due to the 'Ahaṅkāra'. The Absolute Self, for instance, undergoes three states of differentiation in deep sleep, dream and waking states, as its 'Ahaṅkāra' sleeps, is half-awake, or is fully awake. In deep sleep, there is no consciousness of distinction, because the Ahaṅkāra is completely merged in nescience while in the other two states there is half or full differentiation of consciousness according to the full or partial activity of the Ahaṅkāra.†

The undifferentiated consciousness appears differentiated exactly as 'light', 'ether' and the sun appear differentiated through their objects like finger, vessel, and water, which constitute their limiting adjuncts.‡

Duality which is wrongly supposed to be the eternal feature of consciousness is due only to the activity of the 'manas'.§ The non-dual consciousness is not differentiated. There is in it no diversity. He who perceives diversity "goes from death to death".||

*It is unaffected, 'asaṅga' and 'kevala' :*

It is unaffected by the experiences of good and bad and pleasure and pain, for it stands isolated as a

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* *V.P.S.* p. 40.

† *D.D.V.* 10. "Ahaṅkāralaye suptau bhavet dehaḥ api acetanaḥ, Ahaṅkāra vikāsārdhaḥ svapnaḥ, sarvastu jāgaraḥ".

‡ *S.B.* 3.2.25. "Yathā prakāśākāśa savitr prabhṛtayo aṅguli karakodaka prabhṛtiṣu karmasūpādhibhūteṣu saviśeṣā ivāvabhāsante, na ca svābhāvikīm aviśeṣātmatām jahati".

§ *G.K.* 3.31. also *Yaga-Vāśiṣṭha.* 'Manodṛśyam idam dvaitam, amanībhāve dvaitam nopalabhyate'.

|| *Bṛh.* 4.4.19.

spectator and is not a participator in experience. Feelings of desire and longing, pleasure and pain, do not touch it, because they do not form part of it.

Imperfections and consequent misery and unhappiness belong to the level of finitude and limitations which is that of the 'Jīva'. The Absolute or the Pure consciousness which is in reality unaffected by the possibilities of joy and sorrow, only comes to superimpose upon itself the conditions of bodily and mental aggregates. It then regards itself as happy or unhappy, though in reality it is free from all limiting adjuncts of 'Buddhi' without which it could not be a feeler, an enjoyer or a doer of anything.* It is absolutely unassociated with anything else, physical, emotional or mental and has no direct connections whatever.† Connection, mixture or 'Saṅsarga' is a cause of impurity. The transcendental consciousness is absolutely pure, 'śuddha' and stands in its unmixed purity of isolation.‡

The Upaniṣads say that the 'Puruṣa' is unconnected, 'Asango' yam Puruṣaḥ. It is as aloof as a sword drawn from its sheath. The Yoga teaches that the 'Kevalī puruṣa' though 'śuddha' and 'amala', becomes tainted and tinged because of its connection 'saṅsarga' with what is not itself, as when pure and clear 'viśada' water gets impure by its association with other objects.

According to Advaita, the nature of Brahma is absolutely unconnected, and in Hindu Idealism, it is such a consciousness alone which is truly real and has a 'pāramārthika sattā'. In contrast with the reality of this transcendental consciousness, the empirical consciousness whose very nature is of differentiation, inter-connections and change has only a

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* *Y.B.* 2.18.

† *Bṛh.* 2.1.8. 4.3.7.f. 3.9.26.

‡ *Y.B.* 3.27.

dependent and conditional reality. The reality of the 'Vyāvahārika' consciousness is not absolutely denied. What is maintained is that the reality of the empirical consciousness is conditional and is due to the basic reality of the transcendental consciousness which in turn is not based upon other conditions. It is important to bear in mind here a distinction between the Realist and the Idealist attitudes with regard to the two realms of consciousness. While the Realist denies *absolutely* the transcendental and the unconditional consciousness, the Idealist denies only the *absoluteness* of the empirical consciousness which he never denies absolutely.

It is not a little strange that the reality of "the reality of the reality" 'satyasya satyam' should have been often and forcibly denied only because it is not amenable to the usual canons of knowability and proof. Yet the only proof ever available for the existence of the transcendental consciousness must rest upon the discovery of the presuppositions of the empirical consciousness itself. One feels that the validity and the efficacy of this indirect method of proof has not been fully recognised. What is presupposed in the existence of a fact is as undeniably real as the fact which presupposes it, even though the presupposition may never be directly verifiable. The reasons, therefore, for believing in the transcendental nature of consciousness other than a direct realisation of it in a supra-intellectual vision of 'Samādhi' or 'Brahma jñāna' are logico-epistemological, and the only proof capable of being advanced must be of the nature of *a priori* deduction. An analysis of the very possibility of knowledge leads to the postulation of a continuously present and constant consciousness, a consistent denial of which must inevitably lead to the two undesirable alternatives of materialism or agnosticism neither of which can be a solution of the problem of knowledge and consciousness.

*The intellectual knowledge of the unconditioned:*

We have already said that the transcendental consciousness is not to be grasped in its completeness by our discursive intellect through any one of its rational categories of thought. It is in this sense beyond word and speech. We have also maintained that what is unexhausted by our particularised snaps of intellect and logic is not necessarily unexperienced, even as the limitless 'Ākāśa' is not unknown though never completely grasped in a single act of spatial perception. It is, however, unknown only in the logical or the relational way for the simple reason that the Absolute consciousness is not relational or logical, and, therefore, all attempts to grasp it only logically must fail. It is, therefore, best described negatively by denying of it all the predicates that are usually attributed to other objects.

This method of '*via remotionis*' or '*negativa*' is not unknown in Christian context too. "What he is not, is clearer to us than what he is",* and also that he cannot be reached "except by negation."† We cannot exhaust the ultimate subject in our single or collective predication of it. No predicate can do full justice to it and therefore it is best described positively only by the help of metaphors. Even then, it should not be forgotten that since these metaphors are derived from the world of objects, they can only aid the intellect in having a tolerably clear notion of what is essentially indescribable, but cannot in any way make the intellect fully grasp it.

It may be asked, how then can there be a philosophy of the transcendental consciousness? In answer to the above, we repeat that the unconditioned Absolute, though inherently and logically undefinable, is

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* Thomas Acquinas.

† Nicholas of Causa. Also "there are things which our intellect cannot beheld, we cannot understand what they are except by denying things of them". Dante.

yet something very positive of which we *can* have a knowledge by other means than definition and description. It is but proper that we cannot have a definite knowledge of the 'Brahman', for definite knowledge can be only of the objects that can be distinguished from one another. Objects like pots and pitchers can be defined because they are determinates and are related to things other than themselves.* But what is not determinate cannot be known by distinguishing it from other things. It is only in this sense that the Absolute is unknowable. The negative description is simply meant to deny of it all categories that are applicable to the object. "It does not negate absolutely everything, but only everything except Brahman", and it is not apprehended, not because it does not exist, "but because it is the apprehender of whatever is apprehended."†

*The method of Adhyāropa:*

But if transcendental consciousness exists, its existence is to be reconciled with the requirements of discursive thinking and it is this which the Advaita Vedānta does by its doctrine of the 'Adhyāropa', or false super-imposition. The doctrine means that though the Pure consciousness is indescribable, yet by a method of false super-imposition, it may be first identified and confused with such determinate objects as the body, the Prāṇa, the Manas, and the Ahaṅkāra, etc., and then each of these may in turn be rejected as '*not-it*' till this process helps the discursive intellect to go beyond its limitations and understand what is not like an empirical object. "Just as when a royal army is seen, the umbrellas, flags, and other emblems of royalty point to the presence of a king who is not himself seen, and the people begin asserting that there

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* *Bṛh.* 2.3.2. *S.B.* 'Mūrtam sthitam paricchinnam arthāntara-sambandhi'.

† *S.B.* 3.2.22.f.

is the king though he may not be seen, exactly is the case in respect of Brahman."*

This method of 'Adhyāropa' or of figurative super-imposition followed by subsequent negation is the only one available for pointing towards an unconditioned Absolute which is essentially incomprehensible in its fullness to the conditioned intellect, and a close approach to which may be found in the consciousness of deep sleep.† It is something like Vaihinger's philosophy of 'as if' which alone is the method of describing the Absolute consciousness which is already set forth in *Bṛh. 4.3.7.* as "It does not think or move, but fications thinks as it were, and moves as it were.'‡

Though Brahman is described by means of name, form, and action super-imposed on it in such terms as pure intelligence and bliss, yet when we wish to describe its true nature free from all differences due to limiting adjuncts, then it is an utter impossibility and then "there is only one way left i,e, to describe it as 'not-this', and by eliminating all possible specifications it of it that one may know of."§

*Transcendental Consciousness and Definition :*

Pure consciousness is confused very often with determinate and objectified consciousness because the very grammatical forms of the language in which we have to express our thoughts have encouraged the conception that it is something like the table or the chair. But consciousness cannot be so defined in as much as it is the ultimate presupposition of all knowable objects. In order to be defined, it must be brought under a higher genus and also differentiated from

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* *S.B. Ch. Up.* 7.1.3. also *Gītā* 13.13. and *S.B.* 1.1.12. 'Adṛśyamāne' pi rājanyeṣa rājā dṛśyate iti bhavati'.

† *S.B.* 1.1.4.

‡ *Bṛh.* 4.3.7. 'Dhyāyatīva lelāyatīva'.

§ *Bṛh.* 2.3.6., 3.9.28., 2.4.12.

other things belonging to the same genus. But that would obviously be to contradict the assertion that it is the ultimate presupposition and the highest genus. Once it is admitted that consciousness is *sui-generis*, it must also be admitted that it cannot be defined in the ordinary way. Furthermore, the process of definition itself must end in something which cannot be defined or the process would never end. In the definition of such a term as consciousness, therefore, "the result would be identical statements disguised by change of name." Pure consciousness cannot be defined because it is something entirely different '*anyad eva*'. We need not again repeat that from this we must not conclude that it is unknown. To draw such a conclusion would be as absurd as that of a man 'who fails to see, though near, the existence of himself, which completes the number, when intently engaged in counting the persons other than himself'.* It is therefore perfectly *intelligible though undefinable.*

The attributes of 'Sat' 'Cit' and 'Ananta' do not define it, for it is not a finite thing. They only describe it in their combined connotation.† The ultimate unity of consciousness must be an "undefinable universal" for 'words signify counter-realities in an objective world only',‡ and the Absolute consciousness has no counter-reality and hence cannot be named or defined.

In denying the Absolute consciousness, the agnostic Buddhist, the empiricist 'Naiyāyika' and the pseudo-idealists like Rāmānuja, have a common assumption that everything which is real for us must be either

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* *Taitt. B.B.S.B.*

† *Taitt. B.B.S.B.* 'Enam satyādi śabdā itaretara sannidhānāt anyonya niyamya niyāmakāḥ santaḥ'. na tu satyaśābdavācyam eva Brahma'.

‡ *Ch. Up.* 6.2.1. *S.B.*

determinate and definable or pure nothing.* It is a mistake to suppose that whatever is, is capable of being perceived like a pot through the medium of the senses and what is not so perceived is like the horns of a hare. "The ultimate consciousness to which all objects are presented cannot itself be meaningless though it cannot be defined in the way of a definite object".† Consciousness is '*anidam*', it cannot take the form of '*idam*', and it should therefore be grasped as '*anidam*'. A single cognitive bit being co-relative to an other cognitive bit, may be differentiated and defined, but the foundational consciousness which cannot be co-related with anything outside itself cannot be so defined.

A unique and infinite reality would not be knowable because to know it is to distinguish it from something else. It is well known that the infinite cannot be divided and therefore if the absolute consciousness which is infinite be divided into the knowing agent, the knowledge and the knowable object, it cannot as such be infinite.

*Transcendental consciousness and language :*

Our analysis of experience has often been influenced by the grammatical forms of the language in which we express out thoughts. The result is that the real forms of existence are supposed to correspond to the linguistic forms while really such a correspondence does not exist. We should, therefore, be warned against the 'vikalpavṛtti' of the language. The discursive understanding which is variously called as 'buddhi', antaḥkaraṇa or 'vijñāna' gives us only a describable and a practically explainable self. We must not forget that what is thus given is, however, only a semblance of the real self and not the true self itself.

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* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 28. 'Sadharmatā syāt, no cet tucchatā.

† *The Nature of Self*. p. 281. A. C. Muckerjee.

The form of language in which the pure self is expressed is not the form in which the pure self exists. The confusion created in philosophical thinking by the linguistic form or the power of words 'Sabda māhātmya' in its 'vikalpavṛtti' is illustrated in *Y.B.* 1.9. where it is defined as 'Vastuśūnyatvepi śabdajālamāhātmyanibandhanaḥ vyavahāraḥ',* which means that the power of linguistic knowledge creates mental modifications even in the absence of corresponding reality. The grammatical forms often mislead us into believing in realities which do not exist in the same form. *Vyāsa* refers to a few popular examples such as 'consciousness is the real nature of the self' or 'the arrow is staying' etc. which are to be understood with care and necessary modifications. Thus when we say that consciousness is the real nature of the self, we are apt to think in the same form in which we think of a cow as belonging to Caitra which would be totally misleading. The remedy of such falsification is 'śabda saṅketa smṛti-pariśuddhi', which means the purging of the mind of the memory of linguistic association after which alone dawns the 'nirvikalpa' or the pure-distinctionless knowledge.

*Transcendental Consciousness and proof:*

Consciousness is a 'svayamsiddha' reality which is presupposed by all proof and disproof and which falls beyond the region equally of logical justification or refutation. It is in this respect also quite different from any other object. Other objects depend upon 'Pramāṇās' for their establishment but the basic consciousness must not depend upon the usual means of proof for it is self-established. It is '*Pramāṇanirapekṣa*'.

This 'svayamsiddha' character of consciousness follows from its self-illuminosity or 'svataḥ prakāśatva'. Proof is quite unfit to establish it, for proofs

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* *Yoga Bhāṣhya* on *Sūtra* 1.9.

and other means of evidence and validity have themselves to be proved by self-luminous consciousness. It is said in the '*Tṛika Hṛdaya*' that just as when a man tries to jump so as to get his feet where the shadow of his head lies, the shadow of his head moves off before his feet arrive there, similarly it is with the consciousness which is self-grasped and ungrasped by anything else.* Consciousness is the very basis '*āśraya*' of the process of proof and is consequently established *prior* to the process of proof.† For it is the accidental or the conditional that can be refuted but not one's essential nature, and what is presupposed in all proofs cannot be established by it, for how can that be established by Pramāṇa on which the Pramāṇa itself depends for its own functioning.‡

*Criticism of Transcendental Consciousness :*

(1) *Rāmānuja :* We have seen that according to the Upaniṣads, the Sānkhya-Yoga and the Śankara-Vedānta, consciousness is eternal, absolutely unchanging and a purely undifferentiated intelligence, which is free from all distinctions of even the knower and the known. But this transcendental consciousness is not without its uncompromising critics. Rāmānuja, for instance, denies such a consciousness on the following grounds :—

Firstly, that there is no proof of a non-differentiated substance, for 'all consciousness implies difference and all states of consciousness have for their objects something that is marked by some difference as appears in the judgment 'I saw this.'§ And consciousness is

* '*Pratyabhijñā hṛdayam*'. "svapāda svaśiraśchāyam yathā laṅghitumīhate, pādoddeśa śiro na syāt tatheyam".

† *S.B.* 2.3.7. 'Ātmā tu pramāṇādi vyavahārāśrayatvāt prāgeva pramāṇādi vyvahārāt siddhayati'.

‡ *K.K.K.* 'Yāni pramāṇādi avalambya bahulam vāgvyayahāraḥ teśāmeva pramāṇe kim pramāṇam'.

§ *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 20. 'na kvacinnirviśeṣa vastu siddhiḥ'.

affected with difference even in the state of deep sleep.*

We have already dealt with Rāmānuja's criticism of the undifferentiated consciousness in the last chapter. But before we pass on to his second criticism of the eternality of consciousness, we might further suggest that the popular belief in an everlasting egoity arises out of a failure to distinguish between the nature of the eternal Seer and that which is seen.† The illusory sense of egoity remains only so long as the phenomenal experience lasts which itself disappears in the 'asamprajñāti' samādhi' in which the Self exists in its own 'svarūpa' as 'bodha svarūpa' and as shorn of all sense of egoity or distinction. The fiction of independent individualism is therefore conditional and must be eventually discarded in our effort for the vision of our true 'svarūpa'. And as Vācaspati aptly remarks, the unconditioned consciousness should not be denied when the conditions do not exist, for "that would prove too much".‡ A crystal continues to exist in its pure transparency even when the coloured flowers have been removed. The distinction of the transcendental and the empirical consciousness is therefore based upon a distinction between the conditioned knowledge and the unconditioned, i.e., between an unfluctuating consciousness and its fluctuations. If Rāmānuja means by consciousness only the varying contents of consciousness (as he always seems to mean),§ then all his criticism of the transcendental consciousness is true, otherwise all his criticisms are beside the point, for; in fact they are not criticism of the eternal consciousness at all. Consciousness is both

* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 20. 'svāpamadamūrchāsu ca saviśeṣaḥ.'

† *Y.S.* 2.6. 'Dṛgdarśanaśaktyorekātmatteva asmitā.' Also *Vaiśāradī* 1.19.

‡ *Y.S.V.* 1.3. 'na copādhi nivṛttāvupahita nivṛttiratiprasaṅgāt'.

§ *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 28. 'Sadharmatā syāt, na cet tucchatā'.

differentiated and undifferentiated in its double aspects of 'content' and 'form'. The *nature* of consciousness cannot be characterised as differentiated, for "one consciousness cannot be conceived as separate from another consciousness on account of the differences of space, time, or form."*

To take his next criticism, Rāmānuja gives two arguments for the denial of eternality of consciousness. Firstly, that if consciousness were eternal, it would in experience also appear as eternal and be cognised as such, but this being not the case, it cannot be eternal. All knowledge is therefore only temporal.† Rāmānuja here appeals to our facts of concrete and particular experience of passing states of consciousness in order to discredit its eternal nature. The eternality of consciousness is not of course to be perceived in an act of perceptual and sensory knowledge. We need not repeat here the well known arguments of the *apriorist* in order to disprove the position of the sensationists. Suffice is to say, that the reasons for the eternality of consciousness and in favour of an unchangeable self lie in the logic of the very possibility of knowledge, and so, it is difficult to understand how a philosopher like Rāmānuja could not see the need of an eternally present consciousness and could confuse between a basic consciousness as such and the contents of that consciousness.

Rāmānuja's second argument against the eternality of consciousness is an attack on the idealistic dogma often referred to, that "the non-existence of consciousness cannot be established," for the antecedent non-existence of consciousness itself presupposes consciousness which means that consciousness is eternal. Rāmānuja, in reply says, "there is no such

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* *S.S.V. Sūtra* 1. commentary. 'cidātmattve bhedānupapatteḥ, cito deśakālākāraiḥ cidvyatirekādbhedasya ādhātum aśakyatvāt.

† *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 26. 'Nityam cet samvedanam svataḥsiddhaṁ, nityamiti eva pratīyet, na ca tathā pratīyate'.

rule that the antecedent non-existence of consciousness, if proved, must be contemporaneous with consciousness",* for, according to the opponent himself such a rule has never been observed because the antecedent non-existence of consciousness has never been observed. But to argue like this is to accept the idealistic position that consciousness is eternal for its non-existence is not observed. Rāmānuja asks further, "how can consciousness apprehend its own non-existence which is contradictorily opposed to it." But it is exactly because of this reason that it is eternal.

To conclude, Rāmānuja's criticism of transcendental consciousness is that "we have no experience of it," and by experience he means the ordinary perceptual bits of fleeting states of consciousness. If that be so, there is a denial, not only of the eternal consciousness, but there is an end to all intelligible experience itself. If as Rāmānuja holds, there is no distinctionless consciousness for all knowledge is of distinctions,† then this is just the character of the states of consciousness and not of that which these very states presuppose.

Rāmānuja not only does not make any difference between states of consciousness and consciousness of states, but by consciousness, he always means only the human consciousness of psychological observation, and not the ultimate consciousness of metaphysical speculation which alone is under discussion.

*The N. V. Criticism :*

Another denial of the transcendental consciousness is from the side of the realist philosophers like Kaṇāda

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* *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 25. 'na hy anubhūtiḥ svasamāna-kālavarttinam eva viṣayī karotītyasti niyamaḥ'.

† *R.B.* 1.1.1. p. 20. 'Nirviśeṣavastuvādibhiḥ nirviśeṣa vastunīdam pramāṇam iti na śakyate vaktum, saviśeṣavastu-viṣayatvāt sarvapramāṇānām'.

and Śrīdhara. The realist denial of the transcendental consciousness is already implied in its concept of consciousness as a quality. A denial of the eternality of consciousness and in fact of all its transcendental character must inevitably follow from the N. V. view of the origin of consciousness. If consciousness is what is produced in time by a conjunction of circumstances and stays only as long as the conditions last, then the entire view of consciousness is mistaken, and as shown already, the most elementary type of perception remains unexplained. The realist, too, like Rāmānuja makes a great deal of the apparent unconsciousness in the state of deep sleep, swoon, and spirit possession and therefore protests that 'if the soul were of eternal intelligence, it would remain intelligent even in these states'.* But the charge has already been answered in the emphasis on the need of a *permanently* conscious principle over and above the mental modes of which it is a necessary presupposition.† Furthermore, what is manifested by a condition is not therefore created by it. Waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and swoon states, are only the variety of conditions which could not have generated or destroyed consciousness if it did not already exist. That is why the Upaniṣads say "whence could it otherwise come back."‡

A distinction between a 'nitya' consciousness and an 'anitya' or perceptual consciousness seems inevitable. If perceptual or the 'anitya' knowledge which alone is the reality for the N.V. and Rāmānuja, were not distinct from the eternal knowledge of the Self, the blind man could not see in his dreams, and if all knowledge were of sensuous origin, it would be impossible to explain knowledge of relations. Eternal Knowledge 'pāramārthika dṛṣti' being the very essence of the permanent knower 'dṛṣṭuḥ svarūpatvāt' does not appear and disappear.

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* *S.B.* 2.3.18. 'supta-mūrchitagrahāviṣṭānāmapi'.
† *Ait. Up.* 3. 'Nityā ātmano dṛṣṭiḥ vāhyānitya dṛṣṭer grāhikā'.
‡ *Bṛh Up.* 2.1.16.

Rāmānuja and the Realists both commit the fallacy of confusing the psychological consciousness of everyday observation with its metaphysical background or the basis, and this leads to the mistaken transference of the characteristics of the former to the latter. This fallacy of the confusion between 'vṛtti' and 'cit' can be traced to the common assumption that consciousness is a product and a quality of an unconscious self, and appears and disappears like any other changing object of the world.

*Transcendental Consciousness and Bliss :*

In order to throw further light on the nature of the transcendental consciousness it is necessary to enquire into the nature of the state of the deliverance of the conscious entity, the Ātman. We have two theories regarding the ultimate state of deliverance of the 'Jīva', the positive theory and the negative theory. The positive theory which has been made popular by the Vedānta emphasis on Ānanda as the nature of Brahma affirms that, the ultimate reality is not only of the nature of consciousness but that consciousness and bliss are one.*

*The Vedānta view :*

According to this view, the state of deliverance is a positive state of Bliss or enjoyment and the gradual approximation of man towards this ultimate goal is marked by an ascending series of 'Ānanda'. The attributes of 'sat' 'cit' and 'ananta' are the same as Bliss. To be limitless, one without a second and unconditioned, is to have perfect 'Ānanda' and Beautitude. Duality and limitation is fear and pain.† What is infinite is Bliss, 'Yo vai Bhūmā, tat sukham.'‡

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* *Bhāmatī.* 'Ānanda-prakāśayo abhedāt'.

† *Taitt* 2.7.9., 3.6., *Ch. U.* 7.23.1., *Bṛh.* 3.9.28., 4.3.30-33.

‡ *Ch. Up.* 7.23.1., 7.24.1.

The Vedānta argument is that the Self in the state of deliverance is either conscious or unconscious. If it were unconscious, it would be like a block of stone which experiences neither pleasure nor pain; and if the Self were to experience neither of these, there would be no difference between it and a block of stone. For this reason, we must regard consciousness as belonging to the Self by its very nature. When this consciousness is drawn outwardly by the senses, there is the experience of the wordly and the intermittent enjoyment. But when the sense organs have ceased to function, consciousness becomes merged into the Self itself, and thus enjoys the permanent, unceasing and eternal bliss.

This ultimate state is called 'Ānanda' in order to distinguish it from another negative conception of it which consists only in the deprivation of pain or suffering and not in any positive presence of joy. As being ard consciousness 'sat', and 'cit' are one, so are consciousness and 'ānanda', 'cit and ānanda' one. The ultimate stage must be a state of positive Being, and even the negative state of the absence of pain can have meaning only if something positive is left. 'Ānanda' is therefore a positive term which stands for the calm and unruffled state of the pure 'cit' in which there is no possibility of any motion or activity which is the cause of pain. According to Kāśmere Śaivaism too, pure consciousness is the same or 'Ānanda' because it is just awareness as a mere presentation without any feeling or motion.*

This positive view of the state of mukti is opposed by he negative theories of the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika and the Sānkhya. The N. V. and the Sānkhya both agree that the ultimate state is only of an absolute negation of 'duhkha' and not of any positive experience.

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* *Tantrāloka of Abhinavagupta.* 'prakāśo hlāda ucyate'. *Ah.* 9.

*The Yoga criticism of the Vedānta view :*

Vijñāna-bhikṣu in his *Yoga Sārasañgraha* criticises the Vedānta concept of the ultimate consciousness and points out that the view is against such Śrutis as 'One who has attained knowledge renounces pleasure and pain',* or 'pleasure and pain do not touch one without physical body'. Liberation is either a positive product and as such it would be destructible, or it is everlasting, in which case, it would always be an accomplished fact, and not be a deliberate aim. Nor can it be said that the purpose of the Ātman lies in the removal of its ignorance only for "a man's aim is always for experiencing pleasure",† and not only for removing something. If it be said that the Brahman gets obscured by *Māyā* and liberation consists in the removal of this veil, then consciousness is not eternal if it can get overpowered. Thus 'Mokṣa' is only the cessation of pain and is called Bliss only to eulogise it for the sake of the dull-witted.'‡ The attainment of bliss is only an inferior liberation.

*The Nyāya Criticism :*

*Śrīdhara* in his *N.K.* offers almost identical criticism of the Vedānta view and says that the theory of the ultimate consciousness as bliss will not bear examination of the possible alternatives. He asks, 'is the bliss in the state of deliverance actually experienced or not ?' If it is not experienced, then though existent, it is as good as non-existent for the reason that it is not enjoyable. If it is experienced, where are the instruments for this experience in the absence of the body and the organs ? The self must be devoid of action and feeling, for action and feeling

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* *Kaṭha* 2.12. 'Dhiro harṣa śokau jahāti'.
or *Ch. Up.* 8.12.1. 'Aśarīram vāva santam na priyāpriye sparśataḥ'.

† *Y.S.S.* 4. 'sukhānubhavasya eva loke puruṣārthatvāt'.

‡ *S.S.* 5.68. 'Vimuktipraśansā mandānām'.

denote corporeality.* Again, the eternal bliss of the self which belongs to it by nature could not be taken away from it in the worldly state without loss to its true nature. Either the soul is always possessed of the bliss and there is no need to attain it or nothing can produce it. Thus, there can be no eternal bliss for the self and hence the experience of bliss cannot constitute the state of deliverance. "We must therefore regard deliverance to consist in the subsistence of the self in its own pristine condition marked by the cessation of all specific qualifications pertaining to the worldly state."†

*The Advaita answer :*

The Vedānta reply to this is, that by the statement that the ultimate consciousness is the nature of bliss is not meant that there is any enjoyment of the bliss in the corporeal sense involving the aid and the instrumentality of body and the sense organ or the duality of subject and object necessary for experience. What is meant is that the ultimate consciousness as opposed both to unconsciousness and the empirical consciousness is of the nature of Ānanda, i.e. a tranquility, and a 'śānta' as contrasted with the commotion and activity of the empirical consciousness which implies pain. It is affirmed only to maintain a distinction between a positive and a negative exprience. A negation is only an affirmation of some absence. That Reality is 'Ānanda' means it is not of the negative nature of pain but is of a positive nature, for negation cannot logically be the last word about reality. Besides, if the ultimate release is only a negative state of painlessness as held by the negativist, then a man in pain should consider himself as released, for even

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* *N.K.* p. 286-287. 'Anubhūyate ced anubhavasya kāraṇam vācyam na ca kāyakaraṇādivigame tadūtpatti kāraṇatām paśyāmaḥ'.

† *N.K.* p. 287. 'samastātma-viśeṣaguṇocchedopalakṣitā svarūpāsthitir eva'.

at that moment, there is an absence of other possible pains. His non-admission of this proves that he desires the ultimate stage to be a positive state, for one negation cannot be different from another negation. Again, the negative theory of painlessness is contrary to the accepted theory of grades of happiness in the attainment of the ultimate stage; for what does not exist cannot be graded. If it is admitted that the ultimate stage of experience is a state of pure consciousness, then the conclusion seems to be forced upon us that it must be of the nature of 'Ānanda', for it would be difficult to characterise it otherwise.

It is impossible to find any difference between consciousness and 'Ānanda' at the highest stage. The negative state of the painlessness cannot be logically conceived without further carrying the concept to a positive state for which 'Ānanda' is just another name. But we must again repeat that even this is no true or perfect characterisation of the absolute consciousness. It only expresses the highest Reality in the best possible way. To say that the liberated man knows the self as blissful is meaningless because the Brahman either knows its bliss interruptedly or uninterruptedly and in either case there is a difficulty; for in the former case there is no point in saying it and in the latter, the Brahman would become changeful. "Hence the texts must be interprepted as setting forth the nature of Brahman and not as signifying that the bliss of the Self is cognised."* It is unthinkable that the bliss of the pure consciousness should mean an experienceable or enjoyable bliss, for 'Ānanda' is no property or part of the Brahman which has neither parts nor properties. It is simply an uncharacterisable and the fullest reality, one and infinite, about which it is best to think in terms of 'saccidānanda' rather than in others.†

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* *Bṛh.* 3.9.28. S.B. 'tasmād vijñānam ānandam iti svarūpānvyākhyānapara iva śrutiḥ nātmānanda-saṃvedyatvārthā'.

† *P.D.* 11.23. 'Sukham advaitam eva hi'.

The positivist Advaita and the negativist Nyāya and the Sānkhya both however agree in holding that the ultimate stage is a state of purity, qualitylessness, and an absolute negation of *worldly state.* What it in itself is, is indescribable, for the ultimate state is 'anirvacanīya' and the description of it as bliss is only to aid the discursive mind to have a tolerable notion of it and not exactly to describe it.

*Transcendental consciousness and Activity:*

The transcendental consciousness which exists eternally and unchangingly is non-active 'Akartā', both according to the dualistic Sānkhya-Yoga and the Advaita Vedānta. In Sānkhya-Yoga, the principle of dynamism, activity and change comes from the Pradhāna; the Puruṣa being pure and unattached is ever the self-same. In Advaita Vedānta, the Ātman is perfect and Absolute and so is incapable of evolution, change or growth. It neither increases nor decreases.* Śankara denies activity to Ātman since activity by its nature is non-eternal 'adhruva'. The Self cannot be the abode of action since an action cannot exist without modifying that in which it abides.† All activity presupposes a sense of self-hood and is motivated by desire.‡

Besides, the concept of activity involves the concept of limitation. There can be no agency in the Ātman without the limitation of the Ātman by the body and other instruments. There cannot be activity in the transcendental consciousness since even the consciousness of activity and change shows that consciousness is greater than activity. The transcendental conscious-

* *Bṛh.* 4.4.23. 'Eṣa nityo na vardhate karmaṇā no kanīyān'.

† *S.B.* 1.1.4. 'Yadāśrayā kriyā tam avikurvatī, naivātmānam labhate'.

‡ *S.B.* 2.3.40. 'tasmād upādhi dharmādhyāsenaiva ātmanaḥ kartṛtvam na svābhāvikam'. 'Ahaṅkārapūrvakam api kartṛtvam nopalabdhur bhavitumarhati'.

ness has no motion in it. Activity, therefore, only *appears* to belong to the inactive transcendental consciousness due to its contact with the 'Upādhis' which are active. The concept of change and activity cannot be ultimate for even activity is apprehended by some one and is presented to some unchanging consciousness. Whenever action or evolution is attributed to the highest consciousness, it is done so because of a confusion between 'Vṛtti and Bodha'. It is the 'Vṛtti' that changes, grows and evolves, while 'Bodha' remains unchanging, constant and static. Mental changes are changes *within* consciousness but not *of* consciousness, and the evolution of mind is not the evolution of the 'cit śakti'. Evolution implies that the different stages of the evolute occupy different places in time. But in pure 'cit' there can be no evolution if within it there is no 'before' and 'after'.

The eternal 'Drṣṭā', in so far as it knows the changing universe cannot itself be a part of it. And that is the reason why the Sāṅkhya stows apart and cuts into two the 'Akartā Puruṣa' and the evolving 'Prakṛti'. The ultimate consciousness must be a non-successional Seer, an 'Akrama-dṛk' of the passing modes of the mind which changes. If the witness-self had changed, there would arise no knowledge of the changing modes of the mind. The ultimate consciousness is above the three temporal distinctions of the past, the present the future, and hence it is unchanging and eternal.* In itself, the eternal consciousness is 'acala' and 'akṣara'.† As a fire brand when set in motion appears as straight and crooked, so also is consciousness. Whenever the pure consciousness is spoken of as an agent, it is done so only figuratively.‡ The pure consciousness is truly no knower also but is called so only epistemologically, for

* *N.S.* 2.69-77.

† *G.K.* (4) 45-47-51-52.

‡ *S.B.* 2.3.40.

even knowing implies the activity of 'jñāna' and being subject to modification. Similarly, it is not a doer also and is not affected by joy or sorrow, but is considered so only ethically.* Thus all characteristics of change belong to consciousness only in its aspect of limiting adjuncts and not in reality.†

*Criticisms of the view that Consciousness is ever-changing :*

According to Vijñānavāda, there exist only numberless series of changing cognitions, each one of which is momentary and has its own distinctive character. The distinctions between these cognitions belong to them essentially and are not due to the differences of objects ; for according to them, objects in any real sense do not exist.‡ This view of consciousness stands in opposition to our theory of an unchanging and a permanently present consciousness. It is believed by the advocates of this view of changing consciousness that these changes are causally determined. But it is difficult to see how a theory of the passing flux of phenomena can be compatible with a theory of theircausal determination. For, as Śankara argues, the denial of a permanent cause would lead inevitably to the supposition that entity springs from non-entity, 'abhāvād bhāvotpattiḥ' Thus anything may come out of anything and a 'sprout may originate from the horns of a hare'.§

Moreover, a continuously changing consciousness would make remembrance and recognition impossible, for a permanently present principle is presupposed by our consciousness of personal identity and self-recognition. The Buddhist Vijñānavādists and other

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* *B.G.* 18.17. 'If one has no notion of 'I' and has his Buddhi untainted, even though he may kill, he is himself neither killed nor a killer.

† *S.B.* 2.1.14. S.S. 6.54. 'Ahaṅkāraḥ kartā na puruṣaḥ'.

‡ V.P.S. p. 82.

§ *S.B.* 2.2.26.

empirical philosophers have sought to deny a permanent and an unchanging principle in our consciousness and have tried to explain the phenomena of memory and recollection by a hypothesis of similarity. But *similarity* is not the same thing as *Identity*, and even similarity must presuppose an unchanging principle throughout present at least through the two moments of the perception of similarity.* It is wrong to suppose that Identity is accounted for by Similarity (sādṛśyāt pratyābhijñānam) for whenever such doctrines have been illustrated, invariably a permanent principle has been presupposed.† The doctrine of momentariness has been illustrated by examples not of momentary things but of permanent things. A judgment of resemblance is based on two things and implies a subject which grasps two similar things. The momentarist has either to give up his doctrine of momentariness and admit a subject that exists at least for two moments or he cannot explain the judgment of similarity; for in the absence of a subject permanently existing at least for two moments, who would grasp the two resembling things as similar? The consciousness of a series of conscious moments would be impossible if consciousness itself had been a member of that series.

Changes in consciousness cannot account for the consciousness of change. Whatever is the object of our knowledge becomes a state of our minds, and since something or the other always continues to be known, it is the world of knowledge that is always on the change and not the knower. The self for which all objects have a meaning is not itself divided and changing. It is therefore impossible to explain recognition and memory without the concept of an unchanging self; for if the self itself undergoes mutations, who

* *S.B.* 2.2.25. 'na ca ayam sādṛsyāt samvyavahāraḥ yuktaḥ tadbhāvāvagamāt tat sādṛśabhāvānavagamāt'
Also, 'Ekasya kṣanadvayāvasthānāt kṣaṇikatva-pratijñā pīḍayet'.

† *Bṛh.* 4.3.7. *S.B.*

knows the fluctuations of the mind stuff as its fluctuations.* The concepts of identity and unity cannot be replaced by the doctrine of a 'santāna' of of the mind-stuff which are momentary and lack unity ; for either there would be no experience without unity, or the unity would be presupposed and provided for.† Two ideas which occupy different moments of time and pass away as soon as they have become objects of consciousness can neither apprehend each other nor be apprehended without assuming an unchangingly present principle of consciousness.

*Activity as Līlā :*

Activity is of two kinds. One that originates in a want, finitude and out of a motive for a purpose, and the other which has its origin, not in want or finitude, but in the abundance of infinity and plentitude, and is not conscious of any motive or fulfilment of purpose.

This second kind of activity is exemplified say, in an artistic dance. It is different from the purposive activity of walking in the sense that in it, there is no end to be achieved, no place to reach to. Nor is dancing necessary to the mere physical needs of living. It is the spontaneous sport of the abundance of the zest of life and has no other end but the play of it. This is only an illustration of the distinction between the purposive activity and the activity as sport. If we heighten a little the difference between the two, we gradually begin to see that the truer is the activity as sport, 'līlā', or play, the minimum comes to be seen the difference between artistic activity and practical inactivity. At the ultimate stage, the concept of activity

* *Y.S.* 4.18. 'Sadājñātāścittavṛttayaḥ-tatprabhoḥ puruṣasyāpariṇāmitvāt'.

† *Y.B.* 1.32. 'tasmād ekam anekārtham avasthitam cittam'. also *S.B.* 2.2.28.

and inactivity meet and coalesce. The highest activity of the *ultimate conscious principle* is the cosmic play or sport, which from the practical and the phenomenal point of view, may be considered as inactivity. The more artistic the dance, the less utilitarian is the activity, i.e. the activity is for all practical purposes inactivity. The highest activity of the Lord is in the form of the inactivity of Līlā. "The activity of the Lord may be supposed to be mere sport, as inhalation and exhalation or, as is the doing of the princes."* The doings of the princes suggest the inactivity of their activity, for they are not active to achieve anything, having all that they need and yet they engage themselves in sport in proportion to their plentitude. Much more is the infinity and the abundance of the eternal and the infinite consciousness whose activity in the manifestation of the world is due to its sport or līlā and must, from a practical standpoint, be called inactivity.

The dualistic system of the S.Y. and the monistic system of the Vedānta both relegate the concept of activity and change, to some principle other than the pure, the transcendental and the isolated consciousness which is inactive 'Udāsīna' and exists as unchanging and unchangeable, 'Kūṭastha'. All change, development and activity which is seen in the world, is due either to a separate and a constant factor of dynamism which provides the contents of change, (as the Prakṛti in the Sānkhya) or is due to the Universal Nescience which superimposes the character of the changing and the limiting adjuncts on the unchanging consciousness, (as in the Vedānta.)†

True consciousness is like 'ākāśa' and is thus said to be 'Akāśakalpa'. Just as the sky shows impurity, change and activity due to its reflecting

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* *S.B.* 2.1.33. 'Evamīśvarasya-api anapekṣya-kiñcitprayojanāntaram svabhāvādeva kevalam līlārūpā pravṛttir bhaviṣyati'.

† *G.K.* 4.1.

the contents and its limiting adjuncts so is the case with the ultimate consciousness which is absolutely inactive but due to the inherent power of the '*Māyā*', appears as active and changing. 'Prakṛti' and 'Māyā' are the two sources of the dynamism and evolution. They provide the contentless, the pure and the inactive consciousness with its content and form. It is the content which is active and illusorily reflects its own activity on the inactive consciousness and not the latter which is non-active. What Māyā does to the Brahma, the same Prakṛti does to the 'Puruṣa'.

*Conclusion :*

We have shown in this chapter that consciousness has a transcendental aspect which alone is its basic nature. Transcendentally, consciousness is one, eternal, unchanging and a distinctionless universal which stands constantly as the support and the substrate of its ceaselessly varying manifold of inner and outer fluctuations. It is the presupposition equally of plurality as well as of unity of all knowledge and experience.

This transcendental consciousness, though always behind the phenomenal consciousness is yet unsallied, 'Kevala' and isolated. It is a substrate which never gets mixed up or shares the qualities of what it supports. That is why it is called 'pure' and 'Kevala'. It remains aloof, itself untouched by the impurities of the phenomenal consciousness for whose play of the empirical role of differentiation and experience, it itself provides a basis. This *detached*, yet ever present consciousness is the only *true* reality, for that alone is the truth which is never sublated.* The reality of the phenomenal consciousness is like the reality of the experience of the dream which

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* *Bhāmatī* 1.1.4. "Abādhitānadhigatasamdigdhabodha janakatvam hi pramāṇatvam". Also *P.D.X.* 11-12.

is true only so long as the dream lasts but is later on sublated. Men, due to an original 'avidyā', confuse between this transcendental consciousness and its phenomenal representation. But, no sooner the true knowledge or 'Vidyā' destroys the wrong knowledge or 'Avidyā', the transcendental consciousness alone shines as the only reality and the phenomenal play of consciousness then finally disappears like a dream. The critics of the transcendental consciousness fail to see it because they do not carry their analysis of the implications and the presuppositions of knowledge to its logical consequence.

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## *CHAPTER VII.*

## CONSCIOUSNESS AND UNCONSCIOUSNESS.

*Statement of the Problem:*

In every system of philosophy, the question of the relationship of "thought" and "extension" has come up in some form or the other. In dualistic metaphysics where the gulf between consciousness and unconsciousness has *ex hypothesi* been made the widest, it is an eternal problem to bridge the gulf. In monism (of either sort, the Materialistic or the Idealistic) the problem presents itself either in the form of the emergence of the unconscious element from the conscious '*cit*', or *vice versa*. How can the one distinctionless mass of an unchanging intelligence which is pure 'form' and does not in itself consist of the diversity and the fluctuations of experience, ever split itself into its opposite of a changing and an unconscious material of itself? The Ātman in its transcendental role is pure '*jñā*' and inactive, entirely dissociated from its emotional, mental and physiological adjuncts, but in its empirical role is a '*bhoktṛ*', under the names of '*haṅsa*', '*dehin*' or '*jīva*'. This concept of the dual aspect of the Ātman is as old as the *Kaṭha*,* if not older. In the history of philosophy, the concept of *Puruṣa* as pure '*cinmātra*', capable of contact with the physical elements as well as of separate existence in the state of salvation has raised a big problem. How exactly could this isolated and unattached *Puruṣa* come to associate itself with mental and physiological adjuncts in order to play the empirical role of capacity for knowledge and enjoyment? On the dualistic hypothesis, *Prakṛti* is a material and a non-intelligent principle while the souls or *Puruṣas*

* *Kaṭha* 3.4. "Ātmendriyamanoyuktaḥ bhokteti āhur manīṣinaḥ".

are isolated, indifferent, intelligent and inactive. How can the one come into contact with the other? Two absolutely opposed and contradictory entities cannot possibly enter into any mutual relation without losing their own identical natures. Relationship implies some common ground of meeting. Consciousness and unconsciousness are totally opposed to one another and there is no common ground between them. While in the monistic account of reality there does not seem to be a sufficient provision for an unconscious principle other than '*cit*' with which there could be a possibility of relationship, on the dualistic account where the opposites are already provided for, the problem presents itself in the form of an impossibility of their relationship.

Thus, taking both the monistic and the dualistic accounts into consideration, there can be formulated three distinct views about the relationship of consciousness to unconsciousness.

(1) That consciousness alone exists and there is no such thing as the unconscious.

(2) That consciousness exists independently and separately side by side with the unconscious which also exists independently and separately.

(3) That there is no such entity as consciousness. The unconscious alone exists.

Of the above three views, we need examine only the first two, i.e. the Monistic Idealism of the Vedānta and the Dualistic Idealism of the Sānkhya-Yoga. The third alternative of the material monism has already been dealt with.*

*The Monistic Account :*

We have seen that according to this view, consciousness is not a complex entity which could be analysed into simpler entities. It is an entity so

* *Chapter* III.

foundational and unanalysable as not to be opposed by any negative category of unconsciousness. The fundamental tenet of this view is that 'there is no unconsciousness'. All things that exist are reducible to and perceived in consciousness while consciousness is not sustained or perceived by anything else to which consciousness can be reduced. Consciousness is the basis of all reality. It being given, some thing is; it being not given, nothing is. Things being given, it is, *and things being not given, it still is.* This consciousness the Vedāntist calls the Brahman.

Now, we do sometimes conceive of an 'unconscious' part in ourselves or in matter, but this is only a pragmatic and a symbolic 'materialisation' of the true reality and not the reality itself which exists only in the form of pure '*cit*'. Man's experience at any moment is really a complete universe but for practical reasons, he ignores the totality of experience and seizes upon those particular features only which happen to interest him. He carves out a portion out of the infinite given and regards this portion alone as his consciousness of the moment. In truth, no bounds can be set to the infinite 'given' which is the logical whole and is all inclusive. It is the Absolute 'Brahman' which by ignorance and avidyā is limited into particular bits of our phenomenal experience, and is split into portions of consciousness and unconsciousness. Conversely, by seeing things as they are, i.e. by 'Vidyā', the limits of the given experience can be indefinitely pushed back, and the whole of consciousness can be re-discovered.

*What is unconsciousness :*

The term 'unconsciousness' can be used in the following three meanings.

(*a*) Unconsciousness is something known by consciousness, and is believed to exist outside consciousness by its own right.

(*b*) It may be something of which we have no consciousness at all and is not known to exist.

(*c*) Or finally, it is anything which can be made the *object* of knowledge, a *jñeya*' or '*idam*', and is distinguished from the subject of knowledge, the '*jñātṛ*' or '*anidam*'.

The first two meanings of unconsciousness are not recognised by the Advaita Vedānta for nothing can be affirmed to exist outside consciousness without being subsumed in consciousness. The only meaning of unconsciousness which can be recognised is, therefore, the incapacity to be a subject and the capacity to appear in the form of an '*idam*'. In complete knowledge, the world of the 'unconscious' (of the '*idam*') is gradually narrowed and diminished till, by complete 'Vidyā', the yogi or the '*sarvajña*' crumbles entirely the walls of the '*idam*', or the 'unconsciousness'. And then, when all objects are seen as the self, there is no unconsciousness because there are no objects besides itself.

Thus, it is held that there is nothing else but consciousness or the eternal '*cit*' which wrongly superimposes unconsciousness upon itself by making an object of itself. The unconsciousness is created by a process of self-objectification and by a reverse process of 're-subjectification' the consciousness is restored to its original purity of a non-doal '*cit*'. Pragmatically, it is not denied that things exist outside our consciousness. Practically, there no doubt exists a realm of unconsciousness in our midst. But it is due to the fact that our consciousness has not yet attained its highest stage of possibility. But when the range of our consciousness is so widened as to include the realm of the sub-conscious, the semi-conscious and the unconscious, then it becomes identical with that universal consciousness in which there neither is nor can exist anything excepting itself. Thus matter

or the unconsciousness is only the receding and the vanishing point of consciousness which alone exists as a paramount reality.

Man thinks that relatively to the stone he is the '*jñātā*' while the stone is a '*jñeya*'. But this is only pragmatically true and is not an absolute principle of valid thinking. To the '*sarvajna*', the stone is as much a potentially conscious entity as the man is an actually unconscious entity though capable of increasing the horizons of his possible consciousness. From the point of view of a more conscious being, man would be as unconscious as a stone is from the point of view of a man. The stone, according to its '*adṛṣṭa*' possibility, is a knower and an enjoyer. The denial of consciousness to other parts of the universe is,therefore, due to our ignorance. The common view which looks upon particularized consciousness as alone consciousness, and looks upon the marginal and supermarginal consciousness as unconsciousness is a view which sees only what is of use and utility in practical life. But that does not mean that the supra-practical or the '*Pāramārthika*' which is the basis of the practical, does not exist. In fact it is the unparticularized consciousness which alone exists in a divisionless presence.

If consciousness alone exists, how does it then, split itself or create its own antithesis in the form of unconsciousness, for no experience is possible without the duality of the subject and the object or without a unity of conscious entity with the unconscious. The Advaitic answer to the question is, that in reality there is *no* experience and that the appearance of it is due to the one or the other of the following causes :—

*The Advaitic Theories of Relation :*

(1) The reflection theory or the '*Bimba-Pratibimba-Vāda.*

(2) The limitation theory or the '*Avaccheda-Vāda.*'

(3) The *Māyāvāda,* or the non-discrimination theory, according to which, pure consciousness without actually either reflecting or limiting itself mis-believes itself to be unconscious because of a non-anwareness of its true nature.

(1) According to the reflection theory, the transcendental self which is all-pervading is reflected in the unconscious intellect which is nearest to it and is able to catch its reflection by reason of its purity and capacity to do so. It then so happens that the pure '*cit*' erroneously identifies itself with the varying forms of its limiting adjuncts and the reflectors much as a reflection of the moon follows the varying forms of the water.* The pure consciousness is reflected in its limiting adjuncts and takes upon itself the character of the adjuncts. The illustration popularly given is of the sun or the moon in the water, or of the pure white crystal and the coloured flower. Just as the reflected moon in the water appears to be shaking because the water is shaking, and just as the crystal takes upon itself the colour of the object which is near it and appears, now as red, and now as green according to the colour of the object, though in itself and truly, neither the moon is shaking nor the crystal is coloured, similarly the Brahman, whose nature is pure and undifferentiated consciousness appears differentiated and unconscious in accordance with the nature of its '*upādhi*'s upon which it is reflected.†

But reflection is a hypothesis of the relationship between two given entities. The true problem of the monism is an earlier one, i.e. of the very possibility of the 'other' to enable any relationship to take place at all. Considering that there is nothing else excepting

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* *Bṛh S.B.* 2.1.19. 'Buddhyupādhi-svabhāvānuvidhāyī hi sa candrādi pratibimba iva jalādyanuvidhāyī'.

† 'Yathā hi kevalo raktaḥ saphaṭiko lakṣyate janaiḥ rañjakādyopadhānena tadvat paramapūruṣaḥ.

itself, the question is what is that in the nature of the pure consciousness which turns it into even a seeming unconsciousness ?

(2) According to the *Limitation Theory*, the all-pervading intelligence gets *limited* by its adjuncts of the *"manas"* *"Buddhi"* and *"Ahāmkāra"*. The common example is that of *"Akāśa"* which though unbounded and one, is often spoken of as bound and many, according as it belongs to and takes the form of a jug or a cloud.*

Thus, the unconscious is only the self-limitation of a limitless and an all-pervading *'cit'*. The limitless is the true reality while the limitation is to be regarded as due only to name and form. But here also it may be observed that the *"Akāśa"* limits itself only into some thing other than itself which already exists. If nothing but the *Akāśa* existed, the *Akāśa* would remain limitless and be not limited. It is apparent that in the absolute consciousness there is no motive for self-limitation and no urge or reason for it. The fact is, that both these theories of the relationship between the transcendental and the empirical self or between consciousness and unconsciousness are relavent only after an assumption of the duality of the two. The root problem of the very possibility of the reality of the other which is also the central difficulty of Monism remains untouched. The monist answer would indeed be that this limitation too of the *Brahman* is only apparent and not real. The apparent limitation of the *Brahman* into the form of the world is only for the ignorant. In reality there is nothing else but the *Brahman*.† But there are obvious difficulties in such a view also.

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*'Sarvagatasya caitanyasya antaḥ-karaṇādinā avacchedaḥ avaśyam bhāviti āvaśyakatvāt avacchedaḥ iti jīvaḥ'.

† 'Ataśca kṛtsnasya jagato brahmakāryatvāt tadananyatvāt' also *S.B.* 2.1.20. 'Māyā-mātram hy etad yat paramātmano avasthā trayātmanāvabhāsanam rajjvāiva sarpādi bhāvena iti. *S.B.* 2.1.9.

(3) We have a third school of the Vedāntist according to which the '*jīva*' is neither a reflection nor a limitation of the transcendental *Ātman*. But as the son of Kuntī was known as the son of Rādhā, or as the prince of the royal family brought up in a low caste family mis-took himself to be a low caste man, so does the *Brahman* through its own nescience assumes limitations and is later released by its own discriminative knowledge.* The Sānkhya also takes up the same story in 'Rājaputravat tat upadeśāt'. and both the Sānkhya and the Yoga hint at and clearly mention the hypothesis of non-discrimination in a manner similar to that of the Advaitist.† This means that in reality there is neither any reflection nor any limitation or modification in the transcendental reality which only misbelieves itself as of empirical characteristics through 'Avidyā' or a big mistake, the reality of which endures as long as the illusion lasts and no more ; for, 'no soul is either bound or liberated'.‡

This view of *Avidyā* or *Ajñāna*, which is shared both by the Monist and the Dualist in common, except for the difference that Śankara makes it as belonging in *some way* to the '*Brahman*' while the Sānkhya relegates it to '*Prakṛti*', is not free from difficulties of its own when its exact relationship with the *Brahman* comes to be determined. The only possible answer for the Monist is to declare that this principle of 'Māyā' *has* no exact nature and is in itself '*anir vacanīya*'. In fact, the strength of the Monist

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* (2) 'Apare tu na pratibimbo nāpi avacchedo jīvaḥ kintu kaunteyasya eva rādheyatva-vad avikṛtasya brahmaṇaḥ eva avidyayā jīvabhāvaḥ, vyādha kula samvardhitarājakumāra dṛṣṭāntena brahmaiva svāvidyayā samsarati sva-vidyayā vimucyate'. '*Siddhāntaleṣa saṅgraha,* jīveśvara-svarūpa-nirūpaṇam. p. 158.

† (a) 'Nisango api uparāgo avivekāt'. (b) 'Japāsphaṭikayor iva noparāgaḥ kintu abhimānaḥ. *S.S.* 6.27-28. *Y.S.* 1.4.7. 2.20. 4.22.

‡ *S. Kārikā* 62. *Vaiśāradī* on 2.17.

lies not so much in its own position as in showing the unsatisfactoriness of the dualistic position. '*Brahman* is not the author of ignorance, nor subject to error, but what is not admitted is that there is *any other* entity but *Brahman* which could be the author of ignorance or the cause of error'.*

None of these theories are free from vagueness and unintelligibility which are only increased by physical illustrations. The non-dual '*Cit*' or the pure intelligence cannot undergo reflection. It requires two for a reflection. And then, objects belonging to different planes of existence cannot act as originals and reflections, nor can the non-dual '*Cit*' be obstructed or limited either by itself or by any other object. Monism admits that 'ignorance is not a natural characteristic of the Self for it increases and decreases and can altogether vanish. What is natural to an object like '*jnāna*' to the *Ātman* cannot be eliminated as the heat and light of the sun'.† But then, what is natural to a thing cannot also be overpowered or obscured. We thus seem to be in a fresh difficulty here. Perhaps the exact nature of the principle of *Māyā* cannot be ascertained. May be, it is too much to ask such questions which cannot be answered till the veil of finitude is lifted. It is our finitude which raises questions and also prevents an answer, for, after true knowledge is attained and the true reality of the *Brahman* is seen, there remains no '*acit*' or the phenomenal world. The explanatory principle of the *Māyā* and the reality of things other than the pure Intelligence, both last only so long as the *Brahman* is not realised after which neither exist.

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* *Bṛh. S.B.* 1.4.10. 'Bhavatvevam, nāvidyākartṛ bhrāntam ca brahma, kintu naivābrahmāvidyākartā cetano bhrānto anya iṣyate'.

† *Bṛh. 4.3.20.* 'Tasmānnātma-dharmo avidyā, na hi svābhāvikasyocchitiḥ kadācidapyupapadyate, saviturivauṣṇya prakāśyoḥ'. *S.B.*

The underlying principle of Monism seems to be that nothing except an infinite and an universal light of the *'Cit'* can possibly be real which is sufficient unto its own *'prapañca'* and *'prasāraṇa'* i.e. which can make objects of itself. The dualistic position, however, gains strength from an opposite logic whose principle is that 'illumination cannot make an object of itself.' The advaita reply to the above is that in reality the illumination *does not* make an object of itself, and that the Brahman and the World are non-different, and so the question of the relation of the two is inadmissible. But our present difficulty with Monism is more of the creation of the two realms than of their relationship. It is not for Monism to first assume the two realms of reality and hen justify monism by emphasising the transcendental reality of the one only. The problem is how out of a single reality of the *Brahman* can at all come the duality of the Brahman and the World.

*Criticism of the theory of Māyā :*

According to Advaita, the creation of the unconscious is an act of Avidyā which is natural, beginningless, and inexplicable.* Avidya can of course be destroyed, otherwise liberation and the realisation of the true nature of the *Brahman* would not be possible. It has an end but no beginning. It *somehow* belongs to Brahman. It is called Māyā because of its quality of plurality, limitation, and veiling of the truth of the *Brahman.*†

This theory of Māyā or Avidyā, which is one of the most important metaphysical concepts of the Advaita Vedānta is objected to by Rāmānuja, Pārthasārathi Miśra and Śrīdhara in the following manner.‡

* 'Anādirbhāvarūpam yad vijñānena vilīyate. Tad ajñānam iti prajña lakṣanam sampracakṣate'. *citsukhī* 1.13.

† 'Eka eva parameśvaraḥ kūṭastha nityo vijñāna dhātur avidyayā māyayā māyāvi vad anekadhā vibhāvyate, nānyo vijñāna dhātur asti. *S.B.* 1.3.19.

‡ *S.D.* p. 313-314. *R.B.* 2.1.15. *N.K.* page 27.

Is this 'Avidyā' itself misapprehension, or something else which causes misapprehension? If it is the former, whose is the 'Avidyā'? It cannot belong to the *Brahman* whose very nature is pure knowledge, nor can it belong to the '*Jīva*' for *Jīva* itself is the product of 'Avidyā', and to say that it belongs to '*Jīva*' is to admit that 'Avidyā' exists as something additional to '*Brahman*' and thus virtually to give up the position of non-duality.*

We have already noted in brief Śankara's answer to the above:—that firstly, so long as we are finite, we cannot grasp the true nature of Avidyā, and when we have attained to true knowledge, no problem of the World and the Brahman remains.† Secondly, that the principle of 'Avidyā' is admitted to be *anirvacanīya*' about which no definite statements can be made. Only it is not admitted that anything other than Brahman can possibly exist and logically satisfy our metaphysical curiosity about the ultimate nature of the Reality. Thus, though Māyā is in some way in Brahman, yet it does not *belong* to it. Finally, illusion or Māyā is not absolutely fictitious, nor does it make the world of empirical objects absolutely or entirely unreal. Illusion is not an illusion from the empirical stand-point. It is as real from its own empirical stand-point as it is unreal from the transcendental stand-point. Illusion therefore has full reality so long as it is not destroyed. Only it has not got the undestructible reality of the Brahman.‡

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* *S.D.* 313-314. 'Kim bhrānti jñānam, kim vā bhrānti-jñāṇa kāraṇa bhūtam, vastu antaram yadi bhrāntiḥ, sa kasya'.

† *B. Gītā. S.B.* 13.2. page 105. *A.S.S.* No. 34.

‡ *Vide* Rahdakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, p. 86. 'Simply because the world of experience is not the perfect form of reality, it does not follow that it is a delusion.' Also 'Illusion exists only from the transcendental aspect'. *B. Heimann* 'Reality of Fiction in Hindu thought'.

*The Dualistic theories of Relation :*

According to dualism, both consciousness and unconsciousness exist independently and eternally as perfect opposites and yet they somehow get related. So long as they stand isolated and unrelated, there is no experience which arises out of a failure to realize the unrelated nature and the '*Kevala*' existence of the '*cit*'. The moment this relationlessness is realized, there follows the liberation or the '*Kaivalya*' of the '*Puruṣa*' which is the goal of experience. But if, as the Sutra says,* 'experience is just a failure to distinguish the '*Sattva*' and the '*Self*' which are absolutely unmingled, the question naturally arises, how does experience at all start if originally the conscious *Puruṣa* is not in contact with the unintelligent '*prakṛti*' and if the two are '*atyantāsankīrṇa*'. Vācaspati puts the question thus :—How can the self whose essence is intelligence and whose brightness does not depend upon another, be properly said to illumine that which is inert, and on the other hand, how can the inert at all *take* the illumination ?†

The answer to the above and an explanation of the possibility of experience is sought to be provided by a theory of reflection or double reflection based upon the transparent nature of the *sattva*.‡ It is said that the '*Sattva*' although not in com-

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* *Y.S.* 3.35. 'Sattva puruṣayoratyanta saṅkīrṇayor pratyayāviśeṣo bhogaḥ parārthatvāt, svārtha sanyamāt puruṣajñānam'. also *Y.S.* 2.17.

† *Vaiśāradī* on *Y.S.* 3.35.

‡ As to how exactly the two, the '*Puruṣa*' and the '*Sattva*' meet to enable experience to take place, there is significant divergence between the opinions of Vācaspati and Vijñāna Bhikṣu. According to the former, the reflection is a single affair, i.e. the *Puruṣa* is reflected in *Buddhi* just as a face is reflected in a mirror, or the moon in water. There is no further or mutual reflection of the mirror in the face or of the reflected water in the moon. Thus on this hypothesis, the *Puruṣa* remains unmodified. Vijñānabhikṣu, on the *other*

bination with the intelligence, but in so far as, being absolutely clear, it contains the image of the intelligence, it seems to come in a contact with the intelligence and so experiences the various things'.* And this is illustrated by the statement, '*Buddheḥ pratisamvedī puruṣaḥ*' i.e. the *Puruśa* who is not a direct seer, knows only by reflecting the concepts of the *Buddhi*. He is consequently an indirect sort of a knower. In order to make the association of the two i,e, the '*Puruṣa*' and the '*Sattva*' possible, it is of course assumed that the '*Puruṣa*' is not absolutely different from the '*Sattva*'. '*Sa buddher nātyantam virūpaḥ*'.† The '*Puruṣa*' is not absolutely different from the *Buddhi* for, though pure, he *sees* the ideas that have come in the mind. He cognises the phenomenon of consciousness *after* they have been formed, and though his nature is different from that of *Buddhi*, yet it appears to be the same as that. Consciousness, therefore, according to this dualistic standpoint arises, either out of a supposed and a single reflection of the *Puruṣa* in the '*Sattva*' as held by Vācaspati, or out of a mutual reflection of the one upon the other as held by Vijñāna-bhikṣu.‡

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*hand* thinks that this single reflection would not be able to explain experience or knowledge. He therefore suggests, that on *Puruṣa's* being reflected in *Buddhi*, the reflected *Buddhi* casts its own reflection on *Puruṣa* and it is this mutual reflection which enables *Puruṣa* to take cognisance of the modifications of the *Buddhi* and thus confuse the experience of the *Buddhi* as its own. Both these explanations are open to difficulties. While the latter better explains the possibilities of experience, it compromises the true and the transcendental nature of the *Puruṣa*. The former while it fails to explain the possibility of experience retains the original and the orthodox purity of the absolutely unmodified nature of the '*Citśakti*'. See Y. *Vārttikā* on 1.4. and 3.35.

* Y.*S*. *Vaiśaradī*. 2.17. "Cityā asampṛktamapi, buddhi sattvam-atyanta svacchatayā citibimbodgrāhitayā samāpannacaitanyam iva-anubhavati-iti".

† Y.*B*. 2.20.

‡ Y.*V*. 1.4. also 3.35.

To put it more briefly, the process would be like this. The *Buddhi* suffers a modification according to the form of an object it cognises, and having assumed the form of an object, has to come in contact with the constant factor, the *Puruṣa* or the eternal light. Out of this contact of the two, there arises the illumination in the Buddhi in the form of 'I know this'. This is either reflected back in the *Puruṣa* which confuses this state which really belongs to the *Buddhi* as belonging to himself, or the *Puruṣa*, having reflected his light on the *Buddhi*, regards himself as its reflection. The same is meant by '*Pratyayānupaṣyaḥ*'. The inactive *Puruṣa* erroneously regards himself as active in perception owing to the reflection of the active *Buddhī* in it, and the unconscious *Buddhi* seems to be conscious owing to its proximity to the conscious *Puruṣa*.*

But, in an account of knowledge and experience like the above, there is a serious difficulty. It is said that 'the *cit* which unites not with the object, is conscious of its own *Buddhi* when it takes its form by reflecting it.† But how can the '*cit*' take the form of the *Buddhi* without itself conforming to the fluctuations of the mind? The answer is that 'Although the moon does not unite with the clear water still it *seems* to unite with it in so far as its reflection unites with the water. Similarly in this case also'.‡ Although the '*cit*' does not unite with the *Buddhi* still it seems to unite since its reflection has united with it. But how can even a seeming reflection of the *Puruṣa* either arise in the non-intelligent '*sattva*' or the ever unmodifiable '*cit*' take upon itself the changing character of knowledge? An

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* *S.P.B.* 1.87.99.104. and *Y.S.* 1.4. 2.20.

† *Y.S.* 4.22. 'Citerapratisankramāyāstadākārāpattau svabuddhisamvedanam'.

‡ *Vaiśāradī* on 2.20 and 4.22.

answer to the above is sought to be extracted from Y.S. 3.55.* which shows that the pure nature of the *Buddhi* has something in common with the '*Puruṣa*'. In the '*Kaivalya*' state, *Buddhi* can be so pure as to reflect the *Puruṣa* as truly as he really in himself is. But this theory of the purity of the *Sattva* and its resemblance with the '*cit*' which is supposed to enable the *sattva* to catch a glimpse of the Puruṣa, either damages the strict dualism of the position or does not explain reflection. For, *ex-hypothese,* the *Puruṣa* which is '*triguṇātīta*' is so completely different from the *Buddhi* which is one of the '*guṇas*' that there is hardly a meeting point between them.

We do not, therefore, have a satisfactory explanation of knowledge in the dualistic theory of 'Sānkhya-Yoga according to which the unconscious '*Buddhi*' is suddenly and mechanically illuminated by the *Purnṣa*. It first of all assumes that the subject and the object of experience are wholly outside experience and then struggles to bring them in together. As Sir Radhakrishnan says: "If the passive consciousness of the *Puruṣa* and the incessant movement of *Prakṛti* are regarded as independent of each other, the problem of philosophy is insoluble".† A truer analysis of experience should be able to tell us that the subject and the object of knowledge are not absolutely separate, and that both equally have a fundamental consciousness as their basis and support within which they unite and come together.

*Criticism of the Theory of intermediary nature of Buddhi.*

On Sānkhya-Yoga metaphysics any relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness seems absolutely impossible. But some rencent Indian

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* *Y.S.* 3.55. 'Sattvapuruṣayoḥ suddhisāmye kaivalyamīti'.

† *Radhakrishnan.* I.P. Vol. II. p. 332.

scholars (Dasgupta and Prof. Sinha) have tried to alleviate the gulf between *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* and to make an interaction of the two possible on the basis of which alone is any supposed reflection to take place. It is obvious that a reflection between two absolutely heterogeneous objects is not possible. Attempts therefore have been made to reduce this antithesis to its minimum by providing for the similarity of the '*Sattva*' in its purest state with the nature of the '*cit*' and thus to make an interaction possible.

Says Prof. Sinha, 'The dualism of Sānkhya is modified by the admission that there are different grades of existence amongst the modifications of *Prakṛti*, the highest of which is *Buddhi*'.* The *Buddhi* is unconscious no doubt, but it is so transparent owing to the predominance of the '*Sattva*' that it is not entirely foreign to the nature of the *Puruṣa*, and hence it can catch the reflection of the *Puruṣa* whereas gross material objects cannot reflect the light of the *Puruṣa* owing to the predominance of '*Tamas*' in them. Thus *Buddhi* is represented to be a kind of 'intermediary reality between gross matter and conscious *Puruṣa*',† and is supposed to partake of the nature of both. It is unconscious like gross matter but is transparent like self-luminous *Puruṣa*. It is only in the *Buddhi* that the conscious *Puruṣa* and the unconscious material objects come into contact with each other. Thus there is made possible a mutual reflection of the one in the other.

According to Prof. Dāsgupta, "The ordinary difficulty, as to how entirely dissimilar wholes can come into contact with each other vanishes when we look at the point from the S.Y. perspective.‡

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* '*Indian Psychology*' page 125. *Sinha*.

† *Sinha* 'Indian Psychology' p. 125. 'According to Sānkhya Buddhi is an intermediary reality between gross matter and the conscious Puruṣa'.

‡ Cultural Heritage of India. Vol. 1. p. 4̈07. *Dasgupta*.

This attempt to solve the difficulty of the dissimilar wholes coming into contact with each other, shows more the desire to do so than the success of having done it. These interpreters perhaps take their stand on statements like. 'He is not homogeneous nor entirely heterogenous'* and '*Sattva puruṣayoḥ śuddi sāmye kaivalyam*'† where an attempt is made to bridge the gulf and make experience possible on a theory of the similarity of the '*Puruṣa*' and the '*Sattva*'. But the question is, does the attempt succeed? *Buddhi* may be pure and transparent by the predominance of '*Sattva*' in it, it may also be the highest evolute of the evolution of '*Prakṛti*', but that does not make it lose its character of being on the other side of the rigidly bifurcated reality. The subtlest and the finest evolute of '*Prakṛti*' is after all *Prakṛti*, and cannot become identical with or share the nature of '*Puruṣa*'. If '*Puruṣa*' and '*Prakṛti*' meet in '*Sattva*' as is supposed by Profs. Dāsgupta and Sinhā, the dualism of Sānkhya-Yoga is virtually given up. The physical and the mental may be the modifications of the same ultimate real, namely *Pradhāna*, yet they are not the modifications of the other ultimate reality, the *Puruṣa*, who is ever unmodified. Prof. Dasgupta contradicts himself without realizing the contradiction when he says elsewhere that '*Buddhi*', *Ahankāra* and *Manas*', though psychical entities, do not belong to the *Puruṣa*, they are all stages in the evolution of the *Prakṛti*. Does he mean that an evolution of '*Prakṛti*' when it becomes very pure and transparent, becomes *Puruṣa*? The '*Sattva*' is either a constituent of the '*guṇas*' (no matter how fine) and must be completely unlike the 'Puruṣa' and incapable of any contact and reflection, or if at all it can take reflection, it gives a lie to rigid dualism, If '*Sattva*' can become so fine

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* *Y.B.* 2.20. 'Sa buddher na sarūpaḥ na atyantam virūpaḥ'.

† *Y.S.* 3.55.

and transparent as to be able to catch the reflection of *Puruṣa*, nothing prevents it from becoming one with it. One step more and *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are ontologically one and dualism is merged into monsim. Such an easy solution of the difficulty confuses transparency with *'cit'*. All *'cit'* is transparent but the converse is not true, the transparency of the crystal, the shining metals and the water is not the same as intelligence. Part resemblances in metaphors and similies can not be stretched into perfect identifications, otherwise Buddhi in the 'Kaivalya' state would be identical with Puruṣa. The Sānkhya Kārikā definitely says that the dancer stops dancing after final separation is realized,*

So long as Buddhi belongs to the *opposite camp in essence*, it does not improve matters to make it an intermediary or a hyper-physical entity. The problem of Sānkhya-Yoga is not only to make a contact of the two possible but to make it possible on their professed antithesis. A more logical position would be either to give up the attempt as impossible or the metaphysics of dualism as untenable. Prof. Dasgupta concludes—'so the relation of mind and body is no special problem in the Yoga theory'. One would have thought that it was obvious that in the system of Yoga, both body and mind of the Western philosophy were the evolute of the same ultimate real, viz., the 'Pradhāna' and that the question was not of the relation of the mind and the body, but the question in Yoga philosophy was of the relation of the *mind* and the *Puruṣa*. The dualism in Yoga is not between mind and matter, but between mind and Puruṣa, a kind of transcendental dualism between transcendental and empirical cousciousness.†

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* *S.K.* 61.

† *Y.S.* 2.6.

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The Sānkhya-yoga gives three possible theories of the contact of the conscious and the unconscious. They are :—

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(3) of pre-established harmony or '*Yogyatā*'.

According to the Theory of Proximity,* the 'Puruṣa' draws to itself the modifications of the Buddhi, makes them visible and serve its end by its mere presence, just as a magnet, itself unmoved draws to itself the iron by the mere fact of being near.† The theory of the reflection of the self in the Buddhi referred to above is explained by this hypothesis of proximity. By reason of the Buddhi's proximity to the spirit, the spirit becomes reflected in the Buddhi, whereby the Buddhi assumes the form of the spirit.‡ And it is thus that the Buddhi accomplishes the experiencing for the Self.

The inactive but conscious Puruṣa need not be active to influence the active but unconscious Buddhi, for its mere proximity is enough to intelligise the Buddhi and to be in turn illusioned into a self-identi

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fication of its own nature with the modes of Buddhi.* 'Buddhi acquires sentience from its proximity to the Puruṣa.' The Puruṣa does not undergo modifications even though it reflects the modifications of the Buddhi, because, the mind stuff is not in connection with the Puruṣa but is only near it.†

But this proximity is either eternal or non-eternal and either case is full of difficulties. If it is eternal, final isolation of the Puruṣa would be impossible, and if it is non-eternal, proximity will have to be accounted for. The Sānkhya answer is that the same 'Buddhi' which creates a confusion of identity between the 'Puruṣa' and the 'Pradhāna', reveals to it its difference also through discrimination, which is temporarily lost sight of, and the 'Pradhāna' having accomplished its purpose withdraws.‡ But if two things are entirely independent of one another and are perfectly heterogenous, and are also infinite, no relationship of proximity or nearness can be possible between them. The relationship of proximity is usually a spatial or temporal concept and subsists between two finite and limited objects, and these illustrations which are mainly physical only add to the difficulty. How can 'Puruṣa' and 'Pradhāna', both infinite and eternal and all-pervasive be contiguous? Vācaspati therefore suggests that this proximity is not to be understood as a spatial or a temporal relationship but as a kind of '*Yogyatā*'§ or suitability between the two which makes co-operation and contact possible. And, in order to solve this difficulty a fresh relationship is discovered, viz. that of 'means and end.'

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It is maintained that the 'Prakṛti' is so constituted as to serve the purpose of 'Puruṣa' who must get his purpose served.* We shall examine hereafter if 'Pradhāna' which is unintelligent, can possibly serve any purpose of the intelligent 'Puruṣa.'

(2) According to this next theory, there is an unconscious teleology '*Puruṣārtha*' constantly operating between 'Puruṣa' and 'Prakṛti' and the two come together by reason of their mutual need. The union is like that of the blind and the lame.† The purpose of the spirit is the sole motive of the activity of the unconscious Prakṛti.‡ 'Puruṣārtha eva hetuḥ'. To the question as to how the unconscious entity can have the purpose of the spirit as its urge, *S.K.* 57 suggests that an insentient nature *can* act towards a definite end just as the insentient milk flows for the nourishment of the child.§

The unconscious therefore acts as a means for the realization of the purpose of the conscious and the relationship between the two is that of the means and the end. But how can the teleology of the unconscious 'Prakṛti' really guide the evolution in all its particular details so as to ensure the best possible mode of serving all the interests of 'Puruṣa' ?

The position has a double difficulty. The conscious entity cannot be in reality supposed to have an end, for the Puruṣa is ever isolated and liberated. 'Bondage and release are ascribed to it only as victory or defeat is ascribed to the king.|| And while the conscious entity does not stand in need of any service, the unconscious entity would not be in a

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position to serve him by reason of its unconsciousness, lack of intelligence and motive, even if the conscious entity did actually need any service. The relationship of the end and means on an unconscious basis would not be very reasonable to hold if we did not look for a deeper reason for the invariable success of the teleology. The wonderful way in which they help each other shows that the opposites fall within a whole, and that the transparent duality rests upon some unity above itself."* An unconscious teleology should point towards a deeper consciousness, within which alone, the fulfilment of both the Puruṣa and Prakṛti should take place.

This suggestion of a category higher than both Puruṣa and Prakṛti is however lacking in 'Sānkhya'. But Vācaspati Miśra brings us to the concept of an Īśvara as the final guarantee of a pre-established harmony,† and suggests a theory of pre-established harmony between the conscious 'Puruṣa' and the unconscious 'Prakṛti', for otherwise no reason is found why the organism of the cow should be just so made as to yield just that kind of milk which should so much suit the organism of a human child. The activity of the unconscious 'Pradhāna is *assured* and guaranteed by a pre-ordained plan to take place in just such channels and ways as are bound to fit in with the ensuring of a particular purpose. There must be adjustment and co-ordination between the conscious need and the unconscious service, and therefore, the self must become co-related with the object by a pre-established harmony brought about by something more comprehensive than either. By virtue of this pre-arranged harmony, the Self can be a seer of the external objects which appear (càkāśate) as if they were the external objects of the self in so far as they

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* *Indian Philosophy.* Vol. II.p. 332.

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have received the image of the self. There is a bond of suitability or co-relation (Yogyatā) between the subject and the object. This theory of harmony is developed by Vācaspati out of his interpretation of the theory of proximity. He adds 'This nearness is not a spatial or a temporal co-relation, but the distinguishing character of the nearness is that the Self stands to the mind-stuff in a relation of pre-established harmony.*

*The hypothesis of God in Sānkhya-Yoga :—*

This union of a *bond of suitability* between the active unconsciousness and the inactive consciousness is not suggested by the Sānkhya Kārikā in the illustration of the milk and the babe. But the later thinkers like Vācaspati, Vijnāna bhikshu and Nāgeśa, found it impossible to account for the harmony between the need of the Puruṣa and the acts of Prakṛti, and so attribute the function of guiding the development of Prakṛti to God†.

The union of the blind and the lame,‡ may lend support to a designed possibility of harmony between the two, by reason of which alone they can unite. But the lame and the blind are both intellegent beings, and can discover points of common interest by intelligent mutual discourse and can intentionally unite. But not so the Puruṣa and the Pradhāna for the Pradhāna is unintelligent, and the Puruṣa inert. But here a fresh question arises.

If the real nature of the conscious principle is only 'Kevala' and isolated§, how can even a pre-arranged co-relation of Puruṣa at all take place with Prakṛti ?

* *Vaiśāradī* on 1.4. 'Sannidhiḥ ca puruṣasya na deśataḥ kālataḥ vā tadasanyogāt kintu yogyatā lakṣanah, asti ca puruṣasya bhoktṛ saktiḥ cittasya bhogya śaktiḥ'.

† *T.V.* 4.3. 'Iśvarasyāpi dharmādhisṭhānārtham pratibandhā panayaeva vyāpāraḥ veditavyaḥ.

‡ *Kārikā* 21. § *Y.S.*, 1.4. 4.22. 3.35.

To that the S. Y. answer is that questions regarding the origin of the correlation are inadmissible since this correlation of the two, the conscious and the unconscious is without beginning 'like the serial order of the seed and sprout'*. Here the dualistic and the monistic theories of relationship both agree in making this relationship beginningless, though having an end. In Śankara Monism, Māyā is *anādi*, so is the supposed union of 'Purusa' and 'Prakṛti' in Sānkhya-Yoga dualism. This position of the beginninglessness of the principle of the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious with its charcter of termination at the time of deliverance is again not free from difficulties. How can the termination of the principle of non-discrimination be compatible with its beginninglessness ? For either the 'Puruṣa' is never in bondage, and hence there is never any co-relation with anything else as pointed out by Vācaspati Miśra,† or he is again and again bound and liberated. Thus the bond is either eternal or not beginningless.

The theory of pre-established harmony cannot stand on the rigid dualism of consciousness and unconsciousness. It must presuppose a third principle more comprehensive and powerful as a guarantee and the ground of harmony. Since the unconscious Srakṛti by reason of its inertness '*Jaḍatva*' cannot be supposed to attain successful results, and since the inactive consciousness cannot desire or strive for ends, it follows that a higher entity should see to the co-ordination of the means and the ends. The '*Iśvara*' of Yoga, is the guarantee of the perfection of the adjustment between the conscious Puruṣa and the unconscious Prakṛti. The '*Iśvara*' of the Yoga, would be a superfluous entity in the system but for its function of standing as a guarantee of the blind teleology of the 'Pradhāna', without which the

* *Vaiśāradī* on 2.17. and 1.4.

† Y.*S*. 2.18. and *S.K*. 62.

relationship of the means and the end, '*Puruṣārtha*' between Puruṣa and Prakṛti must remain unaccounted for.

*The Problem of Experience in Sānkhyayoga Metaphysics with special reference to Vācaspati and Vijñānabhikṣu.*

It has been a difficult problem to justify experience and knowledge on the admittedly extreme dualism of 'Puruṣa' and 'Prakṛti' in the systems of Sānkhya-Yoga. It is accepted on all hands, that according to the orthodox Sānkhya-Yoga metaphysics, the 'Puruṣa' and the 'Prakṛti' are originally outside the realm of experience prior to which, neither the 'Puruṣa' is an enjoyer and the knower, nor is 'Prakṛti' the 'enjoyed' and the 'known'. The 'Puruṣa' is never an experiencer or a direct seer, for he is always a 'kevalin' and a 'dṛgmātraḥ'*, and the 'Prakṛti' too, waits to be 'intelligised' by the 'Puruṣa' before it can be seen or experienced. For the sake of clarity, let us imagine for a moment that 'Puruṣa' and 'Prakṛti' stand on two opposite extremes, both possessing only the *capacities* of being a 'seer' and a 'seen', and of being a subject and an object, but as yet not being either the actual seer and the seen of experience or the subject and the object of knowledge.

Now, starting from the transcendental standpoint of an experienceless potentiality, the question is how do the mere transcendental potentialities of 'dṛk' and 'dṛṣya' come to be modified into the empirical actualities of the seer and the seen which necessitates 'Puruṣa's' taking upon himself attributes and characteristics which do not really belong to him in his 'svarūpa'. In other words, how is experience at all possible and how is the 'original fall' from the transcendental 'puruṣa' to the empirical knower and feeler is to be explained. This

* *Y.S.* 2.20., 2.23,24,25., 3.35.

difficult question in S. Y. becomes more so, when we remember, as we must, that out of the two partners of the polarity of experience, it is only the one, i.e., the 'Prakṛti' alone that can be modified; for, the other viz, the 'Puruṣa' is held to be ever unmodifiable, 'apariṇāmiṇ.'*

We shall here trace in brief the history of the attempt to explain experience in this particular system. Beginning with the Sūtras of Patañjali, we can successively point to four notable attempts in the Yoga-system to explain the supposed experience which remains even in the last resort, unexplained.

In the first stage of the 'Sūtras', it is more the transcendental and the unattached nature of the 'Puruṣa' that is stressed rather than the experience of the 'puruṣa' that is explained. We are just told that there occurs experience when there is a *confusion* and a lack of discrimination between the natures of the two absolutely different and apart 'Śaktis' of 'dṛk' and 'dṛṣya'. Nothing more is said except the declaration (which forms the basis of our present problem) that the 'Puruṣa' exists in two conditions, the one of his true 'svarūpa', in which he exists before confusion and after discrimination, and the other, the untrue one of the 'sārūpyam' with the vṛttis' which he erroneonsly takes upon himself under confusion.†

How exactly does this lack of discrimination occur is left unexplained. If the 'puruṣa' is in reality not a seer but only a capacity of seeing, a 'dṛk śakti', and if the 'prakṛti' is not originally an actual 'seen' but only a capacity of being seen, then the causes of the turning of the mere potentialities of seeing and being seen into the actualities of being the seer and the seen, is to be further investigated.

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* *Y.S.* 4.18.

† *Y.S.* 1.3-4.

There is given of course, the foremost reason 'hetu' of this big modification in the dogma of the 'Puruṣārtha'*, or the purpose of the 'Puruṣa' which has anyhow to be effected, but the hypothesis of 'puruṣārtha', is more of the nature of an ultimate axiom than an immediate cause. It can further be asked as to how does 'puruṣārtha' bring about a change in the essential natures of the 'Puruṣa' and the Prakṛti'? The answer again is :—by causing a mutual confusion between the essential attributes of each other. Here ends the first stage of explanation in the 'Sūtras', but this oft-repeated theory of 'Avidyā'† or lack of discrimination has obviously to be worked out further.

An explanation for the confusion between the opposed natures of the 'Sattva' and the 'Puruṣa' is developed in the 'Bhāṣya' out of the hints of the 'Sūtras' by a theory of "contact by proximity", 'sannidhimātreṇa', which forms the second stage of the attempt. It is held, that a mere proximity of the two, which is the most immediate cause of the potentialities turning into actualities, endows the 'Puruṣa' with a quality of 'ownership', 'svāmin', and the 'Prakrti' with a quality of the 'owned', 'sva', so that through a misbelief, the 'Puruṣa' takes upon himself the modifications that belong really to the 'Prakrti' exactly as one takes upon himself the loss or gain that actually occurs to what he owns. If the cows of Caitra die‡, he takes upon himself the qualities of poverty. Similarly, the king takes upon himself the victo y or defeat§ actually occurring to his soldiers.

The implied meaning of these illustrations clearly is that Caitra is not poor in his own 'savrūpa' by the death of his cows, and the king, directly and in his own 'svarūpa' is neither a winner nor a loser. And though it cannot be denied that the *empirical* self of Caitra *is* poorer by the death of his cows and

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* *Y.S.* 4.34.

† *Y.S.* 2.24.

‡ *Y.B.* 2.19.

§ *Y.B.* 2.18.

that the king *does* lose and win by the defeat and victory of his army, yet what is meant is, that there is another and a truer self of Caitra and the king, which is not affected by these incidents happening within the zone of their 'ownership'. The degree of this *affection* to the owner, by what happens to the owned, depends on the degree of confusion and consequent identification between the natures of the 'owner' and the 'owned'. It is affirmed that through a gradual process of destruction of this lamentable confusion brought about by an inevitable proximity, the true nature of the 'Puruṣa' can be regained, which then, would not be that of an 'owner' and of a 'pratyayānupaśyaḥ' but only of a 'kevalin' and 'dṛgmātraḥ'. We are however, here, not concerned with how is the reverse processs of the 'isolation' of the 'Puruṣa' thus effected, but with the earlier process of how the original 'isolation' is destroyed into an actual experience of seeing and enjoying; for the original metaphysical position of the Sāṅkhya-Yoga is that of an absolute isolation of the 'Puruṣa' and 'Prakṛti' and not of a beginningless or eternal experince, 'Bhoga'.

The Bhāṣya accepts the 'sūtra' admission of the two natures of the 'Puruṣa', one of the 'svarūpa' in which it is free from the fluctuations of experience, and the other, of the misbelieved nature of 'ownership', which is necessarily subject to mutations and fluctuations. It tries to explain the confusion of the 'sārūpyam' of the two by the theory of proximity illustrated by the analogy of the magnet and the iron in which an influence from the one flows inevitably into the other through the sheer fact of nearness. But such a theory of an eternal and unconditional proximity has obvious difficulties of making the contact eternal as will be shown later.

The question now is, has the 'Puruṣa' two natures or only one? If it has two natures, i.e., one

of an isolated, transcendental 'svarūpa', and the other of an 'ownership' and an empirical experiencer, it is then. never absolutely isolated or a 'kevalin', and if it has only one nature of 'svarūpa', how does it get the other of an 'ownership'?

The Bhāṣya leaves it at that. Obviously, the theory is to be worked out still further into how exactly the supposed proximity brings about the confusion of the wrong attribution of the nature of the one to the other which is in other words, the taking place of the experience. If two objects are near one another, why should one necessarily think that it has the nature of the other?

We therefore come to a third stage of an attempt at explanation in Vācaspati Miśra, who further interprets the concept of proximity into a peculiar kind of capacity on the part of the 'Sattva' to catch a reflection of the 'Puruṣa', which brings about the desired experience. We had as yet no detailed mention of the process through which the necessary misconception about the respective natures of the 'Puruṣa' and the 'Prakṛti' should occur. The detailed elucidation therefore starts with Vācaspati. He thinks that by proximity is not to be understood either spatial or temporal nearness but only a potential suitability, a 'Yogyatā' by virtue of which the one can let the influence of its own flow into the other, and catch it.* The meaning clearly is, that though near, not everything would be affected by everything, without having the peculiar ability of influencing and being influenced. While the magnet attracts the iron and the latter lets itself be attracted, another object may neither be attracted by a magnet, nor will the magnet attract it. The same must be understood with regard to the 'Puruṣa' and the 'Prakṛti' too, so that, there is this bond of mutual suitability between the two, that even though the

* Y.V. 1.4.

'Puruṣa' is only a transcendental 'dṛgśakti' and the 'Prakṛti' only a transcendental 'dṛśya' and 'aćit', the unintelligent 'sattva' is yet able to take a reflection of the transcendental 'Puruṣa' who is able to cast it. The 'Sattva' can be intelligised as it were, through its association with the 'Puruṣa' just as the unshining water, which has the *capacity* to take the reflection of the moon (which other objects do not have), appears shining because of the reflection of the moon on it.

Vācaspati therefore thinks, that just as the aloof, the isolated and the distant moon, by her mere shining, puts the water of the river into a state of brilliance and herself unaffected, overlooks 'anupaśyati' the fluctuations of the river, similarly, there takes place a reflection of the 'Puruṣa' in the 'Sattva' of the 'Buddhi' by virtue of which the 'Buddhi' takes upon itself the character of a direct, intelligent and a conscious agent or knower. The transcendental 'Puruṣa' however remains an indirect 'over-looker' or an 'on-looker' only.*

This explanation of experience may be called the theory of a single reflection to contrast it with the succeeding explanation of Vijñāna-bhikṣu which will be called the theory of a double or mutual reflection. It is to be noticed that a feature of this hypothesis is, that while the unconscious 'Buddhi' is intelligised and is made the experiencer, the 'Puruṣa' is yet only a transcendental 'dṛgśakti'. It is really the 'acetana' and the now-intelligised 'Buddhi' that is actually the agent, the knower and the doer, and not the 'Puruṣa'.

We seem to succeed on this account of a single reflection in making the unconscious 'Buddhi' the actual knower and the experiencer, but what about the 'Puruṣa'? Is he still in his transcendental

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* *Y.S.* 1.4. 3.35. 4.22.

'svabhāva', or has he also like 'Buddhi', been in any way influenced ? The answer is, that the 'Puruṣa' is still a capacity only, dṛgmātra' and is still only a transcendental and an experienceless principle. The experience has been made possible for the 'Buddhi' but not for the 'Puruṣa' who is still not the 'owner' and the 'svāmin'. In order to make experience possible for the 'Puruṣa', it is still necessary that the mistake and the illusion of the appropriation on the part of the 'Puruṣa' of the experiences of the 'Buddhi' as 'his own' should be committed, a provision for which, has not yet been made.

To revert to our analogy, let us imagine that when the moon above, throws her reflection on the lucid water below, the reflected water begins to think itself as the active and intelligent knower and the doer of all that happens to the water. But it only means that, the unconscious and the active water, which was devoid of consciousness prior to reflection, has been endowed with consciousness after the reflection. It does not, however, make the moon an experiencer or an agent. The gain is one-sided. The unconscious 'Buddhi' which was always active and dynamic and had lacked consciousness, has now been, by its association with the 'citśakti' supplied with what it previously lacked. It is now, 'as if' a conscious agent. The 'Puruṣa' does not yet benefit or suffer by this contact of a single reflection. It yet remains only a potential power of seeing without actual experience of seeing. The reason why 'Puruṣa' should make the mistake of taking upon itself the fluctuations of 'Buddhi' as its own, which, by the way, is absolutely necessary for the happening of experience, is left unexplained. The moon need not take the fluctuations of water upon herself and suffer from it only because she is reflected on clear water. It is a favourite dogma of the Sānkhya-Yoga to affirm that the active is not called the agent if it is unconscious, and the conscious also is not called

the agent if non-active. And so, now that the active 'Buddhi' has been 'intelligised' by reflection, the inactive consciousness too, has to be made active in order that the polarisation of their mutual influence be complete.

Vācaspati's theory of a single reflection of 'Puruṣa' on 'Buddhi' due to a bond of suitability between the two, though a decided development of Vyāsa's theory of proximity, does not yet fully and adequately make experience possible, which, in the original statement of the 'Bhāṣya' consists in the 'Puruṣa's' taking upon itself the attributes belonging to the 'Buddhi'. One can say, that while Vācaspati has intelligised the unintelligent 'Buddhi', he has not yet 'materialised' or phenomenalised the transcendental 'citśakti' of the 'Puruṣa', when both of these processes are inevitable for experience.

We therefore pass on to the fourth and the final stage of the development of a theory of experience in Sānkhya-Yoga, viz,, to Vijñāna-bhikṣu's theory of a double or mutual reflection.*

Vijñāna-bhikṣu thinks that, in order that experience may take place, there shou d occur not only the reflection of the trascendental 'Puruṣa' on the 'sattva' of the 'Buddhi' but also of the reflected 'Buddhi' on the 'Puruṣa'. So long as the intelligised 'Buddhi' is not in its turn reflected on the 'Puruṣa', the latter has no chance of confusing the fluctuations of the former as its own. There is thus, a mutual reflection of the one upon the other, due to the original bond of suitability between the 'Puruṣa' and the 'Prakṛti'. While the 'Puruṣa' casts its reflection on the 'Buddhi' and intelligises it, the reflected 'Buddhi' too casts its reflection on the transcendental 'Puruṣa' and phenomenalises it. This leads to a mistaken transference of the attributes of consciousness on 'Prakṛti' and *vice*

* Y. *Vārttikā*. 1.4., 3.35.

*versa*, and thus follows experience. On account of this reflection of the 'Buddhi' upon the transcendental 'Puruṣa', the 'Puruṣa' mistakes the fluctuations of the 'Buddhi' as belonging to itself, much in the same way as the moon may take the movement of the water as her own, if the reflected water is also reflected back on the moon.

We thus see, how the contact of the two transcendental 'śaktis' leading to a confusion beween the nature of the 'seer' and the 'seen', hinted in 'Patañjali Sūtras' is successively explained by Vyāsa through the hypothesis of proximity in his '*Bhāṣya*', by Vācaspati through the hypothesis of a single reflection of the 'Puruṣa' on the 'Buddhi' in his '*Vaiśāradī*' and finally by 'Vijñāna-bhikṣu' through his theory of mutual reflection of the one on the other in his '*Vārttika*'. It would have been observed in our account of the development, that, through all these different stages of the growth of a more and more consistent theory, the earlier and the older is never discarded. The later theory arises out of a need of a further elucidation of the accepted earlier one which is in all cases, taken as the basis for the new.

But what is of special significance for a student of Sānkhya-Yoga metaphysics, is to observe the effect, which the later theories as they grow more and more consistent, must necessarily have upon the original position of a strict and transcendental dualism. We find that the original transcendentalism of the 'Puruṣa' and the 'Prakṛti' is compromised and modified. The earlier and the vague suggestions of the 'Sūtra' and the 'Bhāṣya' attempt an explanation of experience keeping the transcendental nature of the 'Puruṣa' as pure 'citśakti' and not as 'dṛṣṭā' more or less intact, and unjeopardised. Vācaspati's theory too, of a single reflection of the 'Puruṣa' on the 'Buddhi', is in conformity with the traditional Sānkhya-Yoga spirit of the transcendental 'Puruṣa's

being isolated and lying wholly outside the range of experience ; for the 'Puruṣa' still remains passive in intelligising the 'Buddhi' through its reflection. It is not yet the actual knower or feeler. Vācaspati, by his theory of one-sided reflection, attempts for the last time, the difficult task of making experience possible while retaining the unmodifiably experienceless and 'kevalin' nature of the 'Puruṣa', which has always been declared to be the orthodox view of the Sānkhya-Yoga. But we do not yet find the 'Puruṣa' committing the mistake of confusing the 'vṛtti' of the 'Buddhi' as its own, which it must, if experience on the part of the 'Puruṣa' is to be adequately explained.

In Vijñāna-bhikṣu however, we come to a virtual desertion of the original position of the transcendental isolation of the Puruṣa, for the latter, not only throws reflection on the 'sattva' but also receives a reflection in turn. It is thus, no better than an empirical self, and has no other 'svarūpa' but that of a 'dṛṣṭā' and a 'Bhoktā', for the relationship between the two is eternal. What becomes then, one may ask, of the eternally 'kevalin' nature of the 'Puruṣa' ?

The theory of 'Vijñanabhikṣu' is no doubt the most consistent explanation of the problem of the 'phenomenalising of the transcendental Puruṣa' but the consistency is evidently achieved at the cost of a sacrifice of the transcendental nature of the 'Puruṣa'. It appears, that while the original, transcendental, and the unexplained dualism of the 'sūtras' fails to consistently explain experience, the later consistency and explanations fail to retain the dualism as is evident from an examination of the consequences of Vijñāna-bhikṣu's account of it. Consistency in a logical account of experience and absolute dualism of the transcendental and the phenomenal are not compatible. May it not be, that somehow, the transcendental and the empirical elements of experience

both exist within the 'Puruṣa' himself, by virtue of which he is both free and bound, an experiencer and a 'kevalin' both at the same time. This change of emphasis from an uncompromising dualism to a some-sort-of-monism, is not however, expected materially to affect the prospects of a logical solution of the problem of the 'original fall' of a transcendental principle to the level of experience ; for that remains unsolved on the intellectual and the logical level as much for the Advaita Vedānta as for the dual Sānkhya-Yoga.

The common use here of the same logically unexplained concept of 'Avidyā' on the part of both the Indian Monist and the Dualist, strongly suggests, that questions of absolute beginnings are beyond the pale of logic and reason which must be content to work with the intermediary sphere between the two extremities of absolute beginning and absolute end.

*Criticism of the Dualistic Theories* :—

We have seen the dualistic and the monistic attempts to interpret the relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness. It now remains to estimate the relative merit of both monistic and dualistic explanations. We will first take the Sānkhya-Yoga doctrine of the 'Prakṛti' effecting the purpose of 'Puruṣa.' (Puruśārtha). Dr. Johnston thinks that the theory is probably unknown to the early Sānkhya.* But whatever may have been the reason for Īśvara Krisṇa's taking up the theory, he does not give any satisfactory answer to the question why and how could the unconscious principle evolve into such a physiological mechanism as to suit the purpose of the 'Puruṣa'.

If we look into the anatomy and the nervous system of man or lower animals of land or water, we

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* *Early Sānkhya* p. 11.

are astonished at the consistent and the perfect intelligence of the unintelligent principle. And as remarked by Śankara, that a non-intelligent thing without being guided by an intelligent being, should spontaneously produce effects capable of subserving the purpose of some intelligent person is nowhere observed in the world,* for only the intelligent can have the motive power and not the unintelligent, and whenever activity *is* found in the unintelligent, it is because of its direction by the intelligent. 'Whatever moves or acts, does so under the influence of intelligence'.†

No activity can belong to the unintelligent. The Sānkhya illustration of the milk of the cow is not parallel, for the cow is an intelligent being, and lets her milk flow for the love of her calf. But Puruṣa being indifferent 'udāsīna', there is no reason why the Pradhāna should be impelled to activity for his sake. It is therefore impossible to see why it should modify itself when the Puruṣa stands in no relation to it at all.‡ There should be no spontaneous activity on the part of the unconscious principle without the instrumentality of an intelligent principle, and even when the intelligent and the unintelligent co-operate, there is always to be found, a well regulated arrangement, for otherwise, 'why does not the unintelligent grass modify itself into milk when eaten by a bull just as it does when eaten by a cow ?§ No category or purpose can be attributed as belonging to the unintelligent 'Pradhāna'.‖ Activity has always a

* *S.B.* 2.2.1. 'Nācetanam loke cetanānadhiṣṭhitam svatantram kincidviśiṣṭa puruṣārtha nivartana samarthān vikārān viracayad-dṛṣṭam'.

† *Bṛh.* 3.8.9.

‡ *S.B.* 2.2.4. 'Puruṣastūdāsīno..anapekṣakam pradhānam.. kadācit parinamte kadācinna ityetadayuktam.

§ *S.B.* 2.2.5. 'Dhenvaiva hy upabhuktam tṛṇādi kṣīrībhavit na prahīṇa manaduḥ ādyupabhuktam vā'.

‖ *S.B.* 2.2.6. 'Arthābhāvāt'.

reference to a purpose which is absent in the case of the unintelligent.

Even granting that the Pradhāna could have a purpose, let us ask what it could be. It could not be the enjoyment of the 'Puruṣa' as maintained by the Sānkhya, for the 'Puruṣa' is inherently incapable of feeling, and hence of 'Bhoga' and if it could possibly be capable of enjoyment, there would be no opportunity for release, for its union with the 'Bhogya' would be inseparable. If it be argued that the Prakṛti would withdraw after the satisfaction of the 'Puruṣa' as maintained in *S. K.* 59 and 68*, that also would not be tenable, for the non-intelligent Pradhāna cannot be aware of the fulfilment of the end.

The conclusion therefore is that the unconscious cannot be related to the conscious by the relation of means and end unless it is the intelligence that is regarded as the spring of activity. But the Sānkhya may still pass on to a new position that though the 'Puruṣa' cannot be active, it can nevertheless enjoy. But this new position too is hardly tenable. If the 'Puruṣa' cannot be an active agent for fear of undergoing changes it cannot be an enjoyer also, for enjoyment involves the capacity to change as much as the activity to move or create. 'There is no difference in the nature of the change required to make the Puruṣa a creator or an enjoyer'† for to be a creator and to be enjoyer both equally involve activity. It cannot be said that the Puruṣa is pure intelligence as well as has enjoyment, for either the enjoyment attributed to it is unreal or the Puruṣa ceases to be static intelligence. Nor can it be said that the said enjoyment really belongs to the reflection of the 'Puruṣa' in the 'Sattva', and not to the 'Puruṣa', for, 'if such capacity does not affect the

* *S. Kārikā* 59 and 68. 'Vinirvartate prakṛtiḥ'.

† *S.B. Praśna. Up.* 6.3. 'Kinca bhoktṛtva Kartṛtvayor vikṛiyayo viśeṣānupapattiḥ'.

'Puruṣa, the making of him the enjoyer is meaningless',* and if the misery of enjoyment does not affect the Puruṣa, all efforts for emancipation would become meaningless. Pure consciousness therefore cannot be regarded to have either an end to fulfill, or feeling to enjoy, nor can unconsciousness be related to it as its suitable means.

We pass on now to the dualistic theory of proximity. The first criticism of this position is that it involves the abandonment of the theory of the Puruṣārtha' as the motive force of Pradhāna. To say that the 'Pradhāna' moves to activity in order to serve the purpose of 'Puruṣa' and to say that it moves just on account of proximity, are two different things. The theory of proximity is however unsatisfactory in itself, for out of the permanence of proximity will follow a permanence of action, and there would be thus no liberation. Besides, the two cases of the proximity of the magnet and the iron, and the Pradhāna, and the Puruṣa are not quite parallel. The proximity of the magnet and the iron is not permanent and depends on certain adjuncts and accidents which are absent in the case of the Pradhāna and the Puruṣa.

The Pradhāna being non-intelligent and the soul indifferent, and there being no third principle to connect them, there can be no connection between the two.†

No logically satisfactory reason of the relation between consciousness and unconsciousness can therefore be advanced on the dualistic hypothesis. So long as we do not admit a higher and a comprehensive reality of which both consciousness and unconsciousness are aspects, the question of their wonder-

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* *S.B. Praśna* 6.3. 'Puruṣasya viśeṣābhāve bhoktṛtva kalpanānarthakyāt'.

† *S.B.* 2.2.7. 'Pradhānāsyācaitanyāt puruṣasya ca udāsīnyāt tṛtīyasya ca tayoḥ sambandhayiturabhāvāt sambandhānupapattiḥ'.

fully perfect co-operation must remain unsolved. The naive dualism of mind and matter which is perfectly natural to our minds cannot stand criticism of the difficulties of a '*tertium quid*' which we require to connect the two absolutely independent entities. If the hypothesis of a '*tertium quid*' be unsatisfactory, we have no alternative but to distinguish the subject and the object only within one universal whole. The monist, therefore, discords the hypothesis of an independent principle of the unconscious as altogether unnecessary for the following reasons :—

(1) There is no reason why unconsciousness should at all move, or having moved, should at all stop. In one case, activity is unexplained, in the other, activity is perpetual.

(2) The unconscious is not capable of well designed and purposive movement. Intelligence alone can start or stop activity.

Let us now examine in brief the monistic position. Granting that there is no unconsciousness, how does unitary and distinctionless consciousness create distinctions and the 'prapañça' of the Samsāra ? By the hypothesis of Māyā. 'It became that which is knowledge and that which is devoid of knowledge,* But motion cannot be reconciled with the doctrine of an all-pervading consciousness too. If 'Pradhāna' cannot start the initial and the original move for lack of first impulse, nor can the 'Brahman' do it for exactly identical reason, because he is perfect. We saw that the monist answer to the question of the origin of unconsciousness was based on the distinction between the two aspects of the Ātman, viz, the 'one unconditioned, and the other, assuming distinctions imposed upon it by Avidyā,† and that the

* *Taitt.* 2.6. 'Tat sṛṣṭvā tadevānuprāviśat, tadanupraviśya-vijñāmcāvijñānam ca abhavat'.

† *Praśna* 6.3. 'ekasyāpy-ātmano 'Vidyā....iṣyate'. *S.B.*

Ātman was held to be a creator in his second aspect. But as against this, it has often been said that the concept of Avidyā is only dualism through the back door. No reason is found why the ultimate consciousness should be either obscured or overpowered. Whatever is sought to be achieved by 'Pradhāna' in Sāṅkhya, is here sought to be thrust on the shoulders of Avidyā. When Śankara argues that 'the highest self of the Vedāntist which is characterised by the non-activity in its inherent nature and at the same time, by moving power inherent in Māyā is superior to Sāṅkhya',* the only reason of the argument seems to be that *one* is superior to *two*, for how can non-activity and activity both exist in the same entity, without making it lose one or the other of these characteristics. The principle of Māyā as a connecting link between consciousness and unconsciousness is, therefore, just either a convenience of absolutism, or an indication only of the unsatisfactoriness of the dualistic hypothesis. The fundamental problem of the initial start of pluralism or of the union of duality remains unsolved. But these charges do not much worry the monist who admits that the mystery of the unconsciousness clears up only when we actually become one with the Absolute; till then his hypothesis alone remains to be logically the least unsatisfactory.

*Conclusion :*

We have examined the Advaita Vedānta and the Sāṅkhya-Yoga views of the relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness in detail, for these two schools believe in the independent and eternal existence of consciousness as uncaused and unproduced. It is interesting to note how both these systems inspite of their great divergence in their ontology come to the following similar conclusions,

* *S.B.* 2.2.7. 'Paramātmanastu svarūpavyapāśrayam audāsīnyam, māyā vyapāśrayam ca pravartakatvam ityastyatiśayaḥ.'

so far as the question of the relationship of consciousness and unconsciousness is concerned :—

According to the non-dual Vedānta, consciousness which alone exists is above the category of relation (which implies the existence of two entities) because in the case of the ultimate consciousness, the other term of the relation is absent. It therefore exists as the ground of all relations, in itself non-relational. The distinction of consciousness and uncosciousness is illusory, and unconsciousness only *appears* due to our limitation of vision or to our lack of knowledge and discrimination. In reality, there is no unconsciousness with which consciousness could be related. 'Avidyā' makes us feel as if unconsciousness did exist. This Avidyā is a destructible entity, and in proportion as it is destroyed, the realm of unconsciousness is also destroyed. Almost the same can be said on behalf of the Sānkhya-Yoga dualistic position too. For in this dualistic metaphysics, even though the unconscious exists as eternally and independently as the consciousness itself, in reality, the conscious 'Puruṣa' exists isolated, unrelated and unattached, and so long as the Puruṣa is not *in reality related* to unconscious Prakṛti, the mere *existence* of the latter does not in any way affect the real nature of the Puruṣa. The mutual relationship of the two according to Sānkhya-Yoga, is not in the truest interests of the 'Puruṣa', and is to be got rid of, for the ideal of the Puruṣa remains 'Isolation'. Attachment is the result of non-discrimination about the true nature of the Puruṣa as 'kevala' and 'asaṅga', and the non-discrimination having been destroyed, the reality of the unattached isolation of the conscious principle returns to itself.

Our conclusion therefore is that idealistic Monism and Dualism both meet in their common concept of consciousness as 'Kevala' and 'Śuddha' and that they further meet in their affirmation that the cause of relationship and the confusion of consciousnees with

the unconsciousness lies in a principle of non-discrimination. They differ only in making this principle of non-discrimination (called by whatever name, Māyā or Prakṛti) reside (in some form) either within the conscious principle or outside it.

The non-dual Vedānta denies that the principle of non-discrimination could exist outside 'Brahman'. The Sānkhya-Yoga denies that it could belong to the 'Puruṣa'. If we ignore this difference, they both agree in the fundamental reality of consciousness as unrelated to unconsciousness, and both support the view that the ultimate consciousness is experience-less. In reality, there is no experience. The self, though not in experience *seems* to be in experience.* Experience is not the highest concept of philosophical thought, though it is the last concept of the practical reason.

Experience, according to both the monist and the dualist, does not exist in the ultimate stage of deliverance. For the monist, experience does not exist for lack of duality, and for the dualist, it does not exist for lack of unity. They both have to provide for their polar realities in order to make experience possible, for experience is polar, but they both must also lose it, for the ultimate reality is a-polar and a-logical. Polarity is a feature of the empirical existence alone. The peculiarity of Hindu metaphysics lies in pointing towards this non-polar and transcendental and alogical nature of the highest reality as against the polar and the logical nature of the empirical reality. But the crux of the problem of the transcendental consciousness is that, if the soul has in reality no connection with the physical principle, it never gets really connected and experience remains unaccounted for. On the other hand, if the soul is in reality connected, it would be

* *Y.B.* 1.3-4. 'Vyutthāna citte tu sati, tathāpi bhavanti na tathā'.

impossible at any stage to severe this connection. We are thus, in the horns of a dilemma. Either the experiences of the mundane life are impossible, or liberation from it is an impossibility.

The dualist metaphysician has the difficulty of the connection of the two independent and isolated principles, while the monist has the difficulty of separating and splitting up the unity into its polar duality which can alone make experience possible. In either case, i.e. either in an absolute separation of the conscious and the unconscious principle, or in an absolute identity of the two, we are led to the same difficulty, and the Advaita 'Avidyā' or the Sānkhyian 'Pradhāna' do but little to solve this difficulty, strongly suggesting that the difficulty is logically insoluble, and is a necessary feature of the limitation and the finitude of our minds. Remaining the '*Jīva*' that we are, we cannot hope to solve the mystery of the relation of the Ātman to Avidyā, for if we could understand the relation we must be beyond the two.* No sooner the true Vidyā dawns, all doubts are at rest.

The problem is frankly considered to be insoluble at the intellectual level. Logic does not carry us to the very last end of our quest for ultimate reality, for it inevitably works by creating distinctions and antinomies. The supra-rationalists of the East therefore, believe in an intuition which is a higher integration of intellect, also called divine vision, or '*samyag darśana*', in which alone the Absolute in its totality is revealed to the pure in heart.

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* *B.G.S.B.* 13.2. Page 185. A.S.S. vol. 34. 'na hi tava jñātur jñeyabhūtayā 'Avidyayā tatkāle sambandhaḥ grāhītum śakyate. Avidyāyā-viṣayatvenaiva jñāturupayuktatvāt, nā-ca.. anavasthā prāpteḥ'.

## *CHAPTER VIII.*

## THE EPILOGUE,

*A Resumé* :—

We have come to the end of our enquiry on the '*Nature of consciousness*' according to Hindu philosophers. It remains only to suggest a few special features of the trend of our conclusions in contrast to the similar speculations in Western philosophy. But before we pass on to these suggestions, it is necessary to refresh our memory in brief of the main issues around which important distinctions on consciousness have always centred in Hindu philosophy.

The first main issue about consciousness has been the independence of its existence. The Advaita Vedānta and the dualistic Sānkhya-Yoga, both taking their inspiration from the immortal Upanisads, have alike declared the independent, uncaused, and the eternal existence of an absolute principle of consciousness which is conscious by its inherent nature '*svarūpa*' and exists as pure '*cinmātra*'. The early N. V. Realists like Gautama and Kaṇāda, ending with the later Jayanta and Śrīdhara, not seeing the conscious principle functioning independently in '*laukika vyavahāra*' without the aid of the conditions of the internal and the external sense organs, declared that consciousness had a conditional and a dependent existence in the sense of being produced only by a conjunction of circumstances. Thus, what was to the idealist merely a condition for the '*laukika*' manifestation of an already existing consciousness, was taken by the N. V. Realists to be the very cause of its generation. It was obvious to the idealist that certain truths exist by their own right even when they are not manifested due to the

absence of suitable conditions. To give only an illustration, sounds are believed to exist even when they do not come, either within a particular range of hearing, or in contact with ears. The particular range of space or the contact with the instrument of hearing does not originate and create sound, but only manifests what nevertheless existed previous to these arrangements of the receptive conditions.

Similarly, consciousness also, which exists eternally as a postulate of the possibility of knowledge prior to the conditions of its manifestation is only made known and not produced by its conditions. The Realist insists that if consciousness existed independently, it would be manifested too independently without the aid of the body and the sense organs, which obviously not being the case, independent existence could not be conceded to it. In this discussion about the independent existence of consciousness without the aid of the body and the senses, the phenomenon of the (seeming or the real) unconsciousness in deep sleep naturally comes to occupy an important place, for the conscious principle is supposed to exist there at least shorn off its conditions of the body and the senses.

In the determination of this independent nature of consciousness and its relation to the cogniser, a very important rôle is played by a distinction drawn between the quality *'guṇa'* and the 'essence' *'svarūpa'* of an object, and the question is asked, what exactly is the relation between the conscious principle and its consciousness ? i.e. between the 'Ātman' and its *'jñāna'*, *'samvit'* or *'Anubhūti'*, or to put it in Yoga terminology, between *'Puruṣa'* and the *'Dṛś Śakti'*.

The N. V. Realists here supported by Prabhākara and Rāmānuja, declare that consciousness is only the *'dharma'* of the Ātman, and not its inherent *'svarūpa'*, while Śankara Vedānta, and the Sānkhya-

Yoga are emphatic in affirming a relation of identity '*tādātmya*' between Ātmā and 'cit' and between Puruṣa and 'seeing' or the principle and its function, without which identity the conscious principle is virtually made unconscious. If '*caitanyatā*' is only a '*guṇa*' of the Ātman, then it is only the unconscious or the 'jaḍa' which has an independent existence, and the *caitanya*' appears only intermittently and adventitiously, i.e. is '*āgantuka*' for it is the *svarūpa* alone which is indestructible and not the '*guṇa*'. It is this theory of the inseparability of the essence of consciousness from its principle (the Ātman) which has enabled the Hindu Idealists to tackle the problem of unconsciousness in 'Suṣupti' perhaps with better success than the Western Idealists.*

The second great issue which looms large in a discussion on consciousness by Hindu philosophers, is its epistemological self-illuminacy or '*Svataḥprakāśatva*'. A state of cognition carries its own cognisibility along with itself. Consciousness is a self-luminous light which illuminates itself and the rest of the world. If to consciousness was denied the function of self-luminosity and if it needed another consciousness to illumine itself, cognition would never start, and the whole world, it is contended, would remain plunged in the darkness of non-apprehension. Even the theory of the subsequent cognition of cognition '*anuvyavasāya*' establishes the self-cognisibility of the last cognition. This concept of the self-luminosity of consciousness supports an important concept of the immediate intuition of consciousness '*aparokṣatva*' and its uniqueness '*anyatva*'. It is the Mīmānsā philosophy which has contributed specially to the '*Svataḥprakāśatva*' of cognitions. This part of our discussion is rather new from the point of view of Western Philosophy, where,

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* *Vide* Chapter IV.

though we have a uniqueness attributed to consciousness by the Idealist in so far as it is the ultimate authority of all presentations, we do not have a view of consciousness which is at once self-revealing and the source of all light in the universe without which, either all the world would be enveloped into an unconsciousness, or would not come out of a logical see-saw of an infinite regress of perceptions.

If consciousness was not self-luminous, there would be no possibility of an immediate apprehension, and all knowledge would for ever be condemned to remain mediate in the sense of always depending on other instruments for its apprehension, which would negate the possibility of absolute knowledge or perfect '*jñāna*'. The concept of consciousness as self-revealing and as the source of all revelation goes a step further than the idea of consciousness in Western Idealism.

The next important point and perhaps the most important one about the nature of consciousness, is its double aspect of a transcendental and an empirical existence. Even when it is conceded that consciousness has an independent and an eternal existence, the question remains whether its nature is exactly as is revealed in our introspective consciousness, or is it in any way different and apart from what it appears in '*Laukika Dṛṣṭi.*' On introspection, consciousness appears to be a dynamic principle quickly succeeding one state of fluctuation after another and yet strangely bound and limited to the self-same principle of individuality and ego-hood which owns them all as its own. The unchanging and the changing aspects of consciousness exist in a mysterious coalition. The question is, which of the two is the truest nature of consciousness ?

It is exactly here that Hindu Philosophy strikes a rather distinctive note. It declares that it is neither the unchanging nor the changing alone which is the basis of experience. But it is the coalition into one

of both the changing and the unchanging consciousness which is the basis of experience within which alone the distinctions of the subject and the object, 'Dṛṣṭā' and the 'Dṛśya' or of the experiencer and the experienced, the 'Bhoktṛ' and the 'Bhogya' can be made. The unchanging consciousness which exists as non-active '*cit sattā*' is alike the presupposition of the changing states of consciousness as well as of the feeling of egoity and personality.

This unchanging consciousness unites not with its changing counterpart in its transcendental aspect, where it exists as 'Kūṭastha', 'Āsaṅga' and 'Kevala' even as the lamp continues to illumine the stage in the self-same way as before, even when all the players have withdrawn. This uuchanging consciousness is non-active and self-same, for activity implies non-eternity and limitation which is found only in a state of experience where one object stands in relation of opposition to the other. What therefore stands in the Yoga terminology as 'Kevala' because it is absolutely isolated from its 'other', stands in the Advaita terminology as pure *jñasvarūpa*' or '*jñapti mātra*', or '*Sākṣī*'. It is called 'Sākṣī' because it is that which is '*avikriya*', never modified, and because it is always '*Sākṣī*' only of itself, there being nothing else for it to see, having seen itself in 'all', and there being left no 'other' for it to see.

This transcendental consciousness is therefore free from the sense of personality and experience both in the Advaita Vedānta and the dualistic Sānkhya-Yoga.

Here in this unchanging, immobile, and non-active consciousness, "all opposites are overcome, and all successions are embraced in a successionless consciousness".* This 'Kūṭastha Sākṣin' of the non-dual Vedānta and the 'Kevalin' of the Yoga, differs from the transcendental consciousness of the

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* Radhakrishnan. *Indian Philosophy*. Vol. I. p. 538.

Western Philosophers according to whom the Absolute is conceived as either identity in difference, unity in plurality or harmony in discord and which is only a higher kind of experience. In Western Idealism, the Absolute and the relative are in a way both inter-dependent on one another. While the relative and the conditioned needs the Absolute and the unconditioned, the latter needs the former as much. The Absolute is as inconceivable without the world as the world without the Absolute. But not so in Hindu Idealism, where the absolute is absolutely absolute, so that, while the world would not exist without it, it exists in its own right.

The transcendental consciousness of the Hindus which is 'Kevalin' and 'Asaṅga' and which exists as pure and as just *itself* is in no relation whatever, either of identity or of difference with any other thing, for either there is nothing else beside it (as in Vedānta) or there has been effected an absolute separation with the 'other'. (as in Yoga).

This concept of consciousness as non-active, as a mere witness standing aloof, and 'Kevala', and which is not to be conceived in terms of experience at all, appears to be an abstraction which is difficult to justify without losing any intelligible hold upon the concept. But the general difficulty in our conforming to this way of thought is due to our looking at it from the Western view point. Experience is the last word in Western Philosophy, and self-consciousness is the highest concept of Western Absolutism. Starting from the standpoint of the intellect which grasps truths only in distinctions of the subject and the object, the conclusions about the finality of a world of experince and of self-consciousness as the highest form of consciousness are inevitable. But experience is certainly not the last word with Hindu Philosophers according to whom experience has its roots in the opposites

'*dvandva*' of the subject and the object, the enjoyer and the enjoyed which state itself cannot be ultimate, for it cannot explain itself.

Deeper than the realm of the phenomenal experiences of knowledge, feeling and action and the consciousness of self-hood is the realm of just 'own being' (Ātma svarūpa), which is completely devoid both of the fluctuations of experience however sublime in themselves they might be, and of the self-consciousness however intensive. Even the artistic and the religious consciousness however intensive, are not the '*Kaivalya* state of the Yoga, or the '*Brahmajñāna*' of the Advaita-Vedānta, for they are still within the realm of a kind of 'experience'. Similarly, God also in Hindu philosophy is on the side of experience, though that experience is divine and not human. The activity of creation and destruction ascribed to '*Isvara*' is, after all, on the plane of experience and cannot be very remote from the empirical character of existence. But the 'Brahma' or the 'Kevalin' is above even the divine experience. 'God is not identified with the Puruṣa (Deus otiosus) but with the Prakṛti.*

The concept of an aloof, detached, and non-active consciousness eternally existing as unmodified and unmodifiable puzzles many a reader of Indian Philosophy and they have asked, how can the variety and the dynamism of phenomenal experience arise from the unitary or the non-active consciousness, or at any rate, how can the unchanging and the Sākṣī consciousness attach itself to the changing states and yet maintain its transcendental nature ? The answer is that we do not know how exactly is the world of 'Samsāra' based upon the immobile Absolute nor do we know exactly the bond of union that holds together the immortal and the unmoving witness - consciousness and the flowing changes of

* *Terms in Statu Nascendi in B. Gītā.* B. Heimann

consciousness. We only know and are sure that without the unchanging Brahma there would be no 'Samsāra'*. Here we touch upon an axiom which is considered insoluble at the intellectual level where we can only intellectually understand that the transcendental consciousness is the very ground and the pre-supposition of all the changing names and forms of its 'Saṁsāra prapañca'. The Saṁsāra would not exist if its background of the transcendental support of the Absolute consciousness is taken away or is completely removed, but not so the trancsendental consciousness which continues to exist when all the conditions of the empirical life are resolved and vanish.

This nature of the transcendental consciousness is not to be realized by logic and intellect for in truth, it is not a concept, but a supra-rational reality of being. It always transcends our finite thought. It is for that reason not a mere abstraction for it is experiencable. According to the Hindu Philosophy the intellectual is not the only form of experience. The limit of our thought is not the limit of our experience, it is the limit only of one form of experience. Logic cannot carry us to the end in our search for the ultimate reality, for logic works only so long as the distinctions of the subject and the predicate last, beyond which is the world of the non-different transcendental consciousness of which we have only the supra-intellectual and an immediate intuition without the feeling of the 'other'.

Throughout our discussion on the nature of transcendental consciousness and on the relation between transcendental and phenomenal consciousness, a reference to the inadequacy of logic and discursive intellect might have been noticed with regard to a satisfactory solution of the problems raised; but they have not been made as a device or as tactics of the dialectitian to evade the issue. Hindu Philosophy

* *Indian Philosophy.* Vol. I. p. 588.

which is so fond of indulging in the niceties of logical subtlities would not have been guilty of scant courtesy to logic. And, therefore, the references to the finitude of our intellect and the limitations of logic which appear to be cutting easily the guardian knot of the ultimate problems, are in reality based upon a deep-rooted faith only in the competency of a vision fuller and more immediate than that of logic, a kind of '*samyak Darśanā*' which alone can resolve all doubts. Logic and intellect are only parts of a man's being and not his whole being. It is, here again, that Hindu Idealistic attitude differs from its Western counterpart.

For the attainment of the Absolute consciousness, logic and theoretical thinking have an independent status of autonomy in Western Philosophy which they are deprived of in Hindu thought. A way of thinking has got to give place at some stage to a way of living. Logical consciousness is not the whole of consciousness. As the mere consciousness of sensibility of an animal separates him from the conceptual self-consciousness of a human being, so does the merely logical consciousness of man separate him from the '*darśana*' of a '*ṛṣi*'.

The Philosophy of India, therefore, takes its stand not upon the merely analytical logic but on the inherent wholeness of the spirit. There is something transcending the logical consciousness which may be called by any name of, "intuition, revelation, cosmic consciousness or God-vision", and which we may not be able to describe very adequately, but which, we are sure, has a "wider compass and a purer illumination"*, and which is a better instrument than logic for the grasp of the ultimate truth, the 'Satyam'. It may be asked at this stage : does rational philosophy in India then merge into a mystic vision and is logic only a futile pursuit ? We

* Indian Philosophy. Vol. I. p. 25.

cannot enter into these questions just here, but this much can certainly be said, that pure reasoning is generally not the last and the most successful way of approach to this hidden truth for the Hindus.

The wholeness of life cannot be split up into two compartments of a merely intellectual cognition and a spiritual vision of the Absolute, so that, while the intellect tries to understand ultimate problems of life, the moral and the spiritual consciousness is left to itself. May be, on the contrary, that it is only through a moral and a spiritual 'sādhanā' that the intellectual seeker can hope to attain the vision of the absolute truth. And though an intellectual grasp of the ultimate reality is possible, it is not enough. It is only a stepping stone to the higher stage of 'Sādhanā', or spiritual realisation in which alone the highest reality is fully revealed. The realisation of the Absolute cannot dawn upon us unless we have attained to a stage of perfect harmony between our vital, mental and psychical beings, and have by constant meditation and 'sādhanā' purified our being enough to receive the intuition of the transcendental.

This is the reason why the Upanisads have laid such emphasis on 'Upāsanā'. 'Upāsanā alone, as a 'logico-magical faith in the efficacy of participation',* can put us into a right attitude towards being a fit receptacle of the illumination of the final truth. It elevates our feeling and widens the compass of our receptibility and makes it better suited to receive the vision of the Absolute consciousness which is a unique experience in as much as it implies the freedom of consciousness from the polarity of knowledge and all psychic mutations.

That a truth is realisable by actual sādhanā, does not necessarily imply that all theoretical efforts

* B. Heimann. 'Some basic principles of Hindu Philosophy'.

are futile. Hindu thinking on the other hand, unequivocally asserts that the rational and the moral stages of life are an integral part of that highest spiritual attainment in which the true *'Svarūpa'* of the 'Ātman' is to be immediately intuited. The spiritual life is not to be realised in a contentless vacuum devoid of rational or moral subsistence. Inspite of the many repetitions regarding the limits of merely discursive reasoning, Hindu thought is never absolutly sceptical about the relative value of it.

The scriptures declare that the problem of consciousness is one of the most elusive of truths whose secret is hidden "in deep cavity". It is a knot which is to be unravelled with great effort, the path of the traveller being more difficult than walking on the sharp edges of a razor. That is why, it is said, that out of a thousand that listen, only a few understand and out of the few that understand, only one or two realise it. Hence the sages appeal to the spiritual insight side by side with intellectual understanding. Discriminating scrutiny is the second stage but this too is a preliminary stage for a higher intuitive perception of the whole.

Another important trait of Hindu thought has been to declare that the supposed mental and the psychical of the Western Thought are in reality only material. Ordinarily, in Western Philosophy, there is recognised a dualism between matter and mind which are held to belong to qualitatively two different levels. In man, his body and the sense organs are supposed to be material, but the psychological complex of his mind and egoity, sensations, thoughts and feelings are supposed to be entirely unlike the material existence, and are held to be mental as opposed to the physical. It is this accepted dualism often expressed by 'What is mind ?' 'no matter', and 'What is matter?' 'never mind', which is sought to be explained by the various theories of materialism,

spiritualism, interaction and parallelism between mind and matter. But strangely enough, no such separation is made between mind and matter in Hindu Philosophy in general.

The reason is that, both the material and the mental have alike the same material basis, and are the different modifications of the same ultimate 'Pradhāna'. No separation is therefore made between one *phenomenon* and another or between one kind of modification and another. A distinction is however, allowed between the material and the mental, resting merely on the degree of subtility '*sūkṣmatā*' and fineness retained in the process of modification. But while no separation is made between one phenomenon and the other which are only distinct having a common source, a separation *is* made between phenomenon and noumenon which are not only distinct but absolutely separate and do not have a common source.

To illustrate our point, let us take the Sānkhya-Yoga. In this system, the intermediate mental *quid* of 'manas', 'buddhi' and 'ahaṅkāra', (between the noumenal 'Puruṣa', which is pure 'cit śakti' and the 'sthūla', 'śarīra' which is pure matter) is held to be as material and unconscious as the 'śarīra' itself, for they are all the modifications of the same 'Pradhāna'. They may be classed as mental and material on account of differences in function and the fineness of form, yet generically, they belong to the same genus, 'avyakta'. As Dr. Heimann says, 'Intellect, is according to Sānkhya, not an emanation of the spirit or of the 'Puruṣa' as we may expect, but of Prakṛti or the primary matter. Even Ahaṅkāra or the principle of individuation of consciousness is the product of the root matter'*. And though they are distinguished between themselves as material and mental, they are together and in common

* B. Heimann. '*Reality of Fiction*'.

separated as '*acetana*' from the 'Puruṣa' which alone is the source of consciousness or '*cit*'. The supposed mental entity par excellence, i.e., the 'Buddhi', which in perception takes upon itself the forms of the external object remains unconscious till it has received the reflection of the transcendental consciousness of the 'Puruṣa'. This transcendental principle of consciousness, the 'Puruṣa,' is so aloof and separated that it does not in itself share the qualities either of the root principle of unconscious 'Pradhana' or of its phenomenal mental modifications. Thus the dualism in Śankhya-Yoga is not between the physical and the mental as we have in Western philosophy, but there is in it a dualism of quite another sort, viz., the dualism of the transcendental and the phenomenal consciousness, for the immutable and the 'Kevala' consciousness is absolutely different in quality from the mutable and the phenomenal consciousness which has the distinctions of the '*grahītṛ*', and the '*grāhya*'. The differnce is not between phenomenal consciousness (mind) and unconsciousness (matter), both of which are the evolutes of the same seed, but between the transcendental consciousness and phenomenal consciousness, i.e. between 'Puruṣa' as '*dṛṣamātrā*' and 'Puruṣa' as '*Pratyayānupaśyaḥ*', or *pratisamvedī*'.

It may be said that since the dualism remains in any case, it is immaterial whether it is between mind and matter or between mind and 'Puruṣa'. But this change of emphasis has a significance. Its importance lies in the fact that if we emphasise the western dualism of mind and matter, we miss the significance of the truth of the transcendental consciousness, and have a tendency to confuse mind itself with the transcendental consciousness. But in Yoga philosophy on the contrary, we emphasise the transcendental nature of consciousness and treat the difference between phenomenal consciousness and matter '*acetana*' as of little consequence, both being

equally far from the true nature of the transcendental 'Puruṣa'. For after all, the consciousness of the psychical apparatus of the 'manas', 'buddhi and 'ahaṅkāra', is only a reflected consciousness and not consciousness *per se*. Nothing that *assumes* consciousness or takes it upon itself as a *reflection* or a *tinge* can be truly conscious. In Sānkhya-Yoga, there cannot be a dualism between phenomenal consiousness and phenomenal matter, for the 'Puruṣa' is not phenomenally conscious (being always '*Kevala*), and the 'Pradhāna' is not phenomenally matter, because it is not yet modified into either the 'Bhūtas or the 'Buddhi' or the 'Ahaṅkāra'. And since the 'Puruṣa' is incapable of modification, and must ever remain only '*Kevala*', it follows that both the phenomenal consciousness and matter must go over to the side of the 'Pradhāna'. This will explain, how, looking from the transcendental height of the '*Kevala*', and '*sattā mātra*' consciousness, the Hindus relegated the realm even of the highest phenomenal consciousness to the status of a '*heya*'.

Almost the same can be said from the standpoint of the Advaita Vedānta. In this system too, the dualism is not between mind and matter, or between consciousness and unconsciousness since the latter does not in any real sense exist. What exists is only the unchanging, immutable, non-differentiated and Absolute consciousness or the 'Kūṭastha sākṣī'. The dualism therefore is, again, between this unchanging transcendental consciousness and the phenomenally changing, differentiated and the particularized consciousness, i.e., between the '*niśkriya*', '*kūtastha*' and the '*nirviśeṣa cit*' on the one hand, and the '*saviśeṣa*', the '*kriyāvān*' consciousness on the other hand, the reality of which also is too obvious to be disputed. It is interesting to note that even though there is no unconsciousness in the Advaita way of thinking, yet here also, from the transcendental standpoint, the phenomenal consciousness which in some sense *is*, is

relegated to the status of a *'heya'*, i.e. as something to be transcended and got rid of, strongly suggesting that phenomenal consciousness has been equated with matter as a general tendency in Hindu Idealism as contrasted with Western Idealism where phenomenal consciousness is itself contrasted with matter.

Our conclusion is, that the Idealistic Hindu thought, though it distinguishes between the transcendental consciousness, the phenomenal consciousness and unconsciousness, has a tendency to contrast transcendental consciousness with both the unconsciousness and the phenomenal consciousness bracketted into one. In this analysis of consciousness, it is a supra-human and cosmic consciousness which is the culminating standpoint from where even the transcendental consciousness of Western Idealism appears as a man-limited Idealism. This type of Idealism, transcending the highest consciousness of man as man is typically Hindu, suggesting that the Hindu frame of mind has been far more elastic than the western one and brings thereby to our notice possibilities from which the restricted trend of our western thinking has debarred itself.

Western Philosophy, starting as it does from the anthropo-centric standpoint of "man as the measure of all things", has its highest transcendentalism only as the highest apex of the base of Empiricism. It has not arrived at the Hindu transcendentalism of either the "*Brahmajñāna*" of 'Advaita' or the '*Kaivalya*' of the Sānkhya-Yoga whose characterisation even as '*Saccidānanda*' is only figurative, and with reference to which the use even of the term '*mukta*' is not quite appropriate, for all these terms smell of a realm of experience which does not at all belong to it. The reason is that in the history of Western thought, Pure consciousness has so far been permitted to appear in a minor role even in Idealism. The chief part has been assigned to discursive reason or thought, to

Will, or to Experience. Consciousness has been taken to be a separable part of experience the whole of which is regarded as partly sub-conscious and partly unconscious. Experience, in other words, is regarded as a deep ocean of unconsciousness with just its upper-most layer as consciousness. It has not yet been believed as with the Hindu Idealism of the Advaita, that it is the pure consciousness which is the inherent '*svarūpa*' of the entire reality, so that, the supposed phenomenally conscious, the subconscious and the unconscious are only just undiscovered con-sciousness of the '*Brahmajñāna*' or as with the Sānkhya-Yoga, that apart from the 'Kevala' consciousness of the 'Puruṣa', whatever exists must not be in the true interest of man.

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Citsukhī .. Caraka

Chāndogya Upaniṣad .. Citsukhā munī

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Kalpataru parimala .. Appayyadīkṣita

Kusumāñjalī .. Udayana

Mīmānsā Sūtra .. Jaimini

Mānḍukyopaniṣad .. Śankara Bhāṣya

Munḍaka Upaniṣad

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Nyāya Kanḍalī .. Śrīdhara V. S. S.

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| Śloka Vārttika .. | Kumārila |
| Svātmanirūpaṇam .. | Śankarācārya |
| Tarka bhāṣā .. | Keśava Miśra |
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## ABBREVIATIONS.

| | |
|---|---|
| A. A. | Aitareya Āraṇyaka |
| Ait. Up. | Aitareya Upaniṣad |
| B. S. | Brahma Sūtra |
| Brh. Up. | Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad |
| B. G. | Bhagavad Gītā |
| C. S. | Caraka Samhitā |
| Ch. Up. | Chāndogya Upaniṣad |
| D. D. V. | Dṛg. Dṛśya Viveka |
| G. K. | Gauḍapāda Kārikā |
| K. K. K. | Khanḍanakhanḍa khādya |
| Kau. Up. | Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad |
| K. T. P. | Kalpataru parimala |
| Mun. Up. | Munḍaka Upaniṣad |
| Mān. Up. | Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad |
| N. K. S. | Naiṣkarmya Siddhiḥ |
| N. B. | Nyāya Bhāṣya |
| N. K. | Nyāya Kanḍalī |
| N. S. | Nyāya Sūtra |
| N. M. | Nyāya Mañjarī |
| N. V. | Nyāya Vārttika |
| P. D. | Pañcadaśī |
| R. B. | Rāmānuja Bhāṣya |
| S. D. | Śāstra dīpikā |
| S. L. S. | Siddhāntaleśa Saṁgraha |
| Śat. Brāh | Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa |
| S. S. | Sānkhya Sūtra |
| S. K. | Sānkhya Kārikā |
| T. K. | Tattva Kaumudī |

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|---|---|
| S. S. V. | Śiva Sūtra Vimarśinī |
| S. V. | Śloka Vārttika |
| Svāt. Nir. | Svātma nirūpaṇam |
| S. B. | Sāṅkara Bhāṣya |
| T. B. | Tarka Bhāṣā |
| Tatt. Sam. | Tattva Saṁgraha |
| Taitt. Up. | Taittirīya Upaniṣad |
| T. S. | Tantra Sāra |
| Up. | Upaniṣad |
| V. P. | Vedānta Paribhāṣā |
| V. P. S. | Vivaraṇa prameya Saṁgraha |
| V. S, | Vaiśeṣika Sūtra |
| Y. S. S. | Yoga Sāra Samgraha |
| Y. S. | Yoga Sūtra |
| Y. B. | Yoga Bhāṣya |
| Y. V. | Yoga Vārttikā |
| I. P. | Indian Philosophy. |
| I. W. P. | Indian and Western Philosophy. |
| K. S. S. | Kāśmere Sanskrit Series. |
| A. S. S. | Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series. |
| C. S. S. | Chaukhambā Sanskrit Series. |
| V. S. S. | Vizianagram Sanskrit Series. |
| G. O. S. | Gaekawada Oriental Series. |
| S. Z. E. I. D. | Studien Zur Eigenart Indischen Denkens. |

INDEX.

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